

The Colorado Quarterly

THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

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THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL



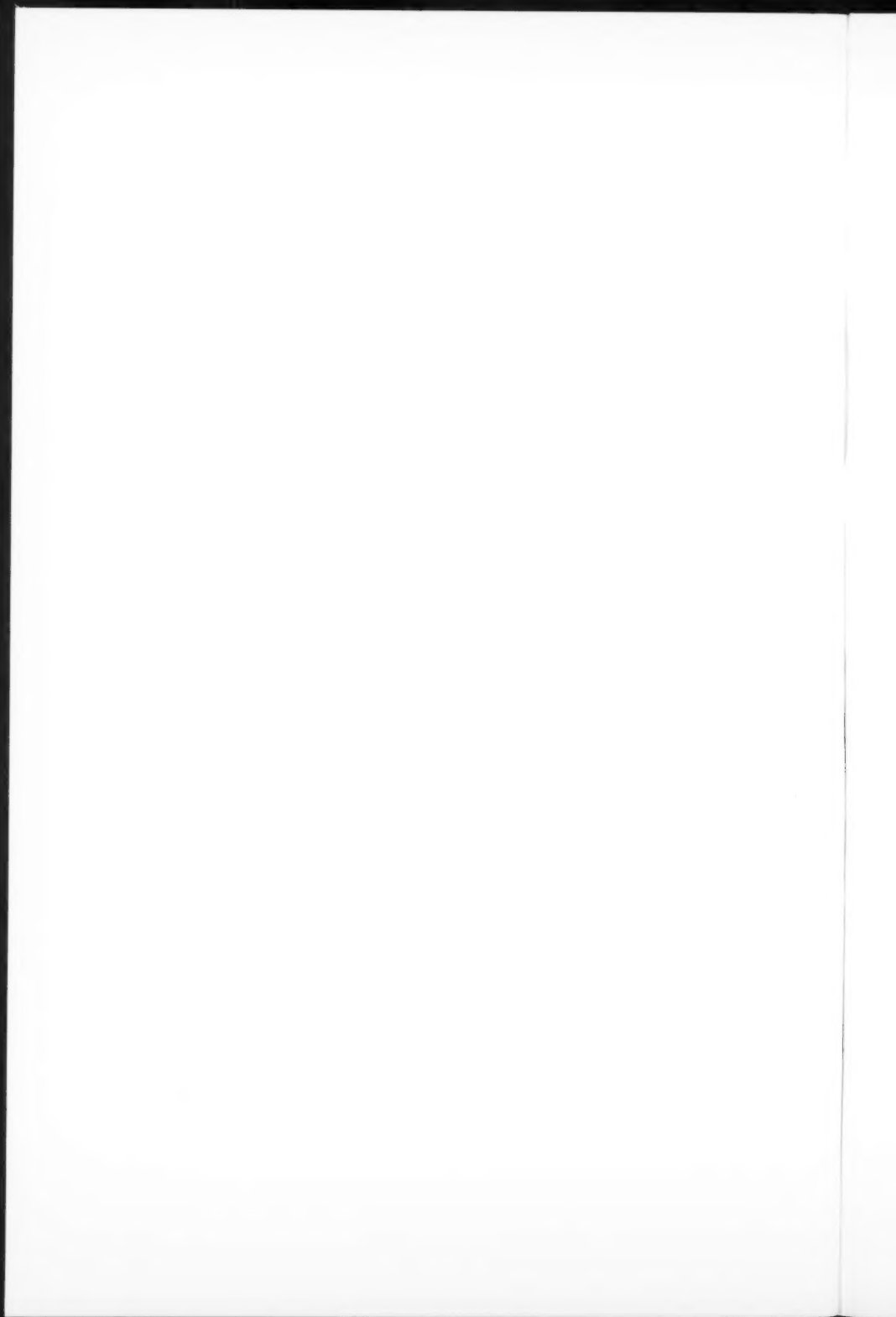
The Love of This Land

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

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About the authors

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH, Boylston Professor at Harvard since 1949, has been an editor of *Fortune*; Librarian of Congress, 1939-44; and assistant Secretary of State, 1944-45. He received the Pulitzer prize for poetry in 1932 for *Conquistador* and in 1953 for *Collected Poems*. Best known of his many verse plays for radio are *The Fall of the City*, 1937, and *Air Raid*, 1938. "The Love of This Land" was the keynote address at the opening of the Freedom Forum in Washington, marking the fortieth anniversary of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and it is reprinted by permission of the League. (A few printed copies of the address are available at the office of the *Quarterly*.)

HAROLD WITT, reference librarian at the Washoe County Library, Reno, Nevada, is a graduate of the University of California and the University of Michigan. In 1947 he won the Hopwood Award for poetry. His poems have appeared in *discovery* no. 3, *Poetry*, *Furioso*, *Accent*, *Experiment*, *The Yale Review*, *The Antioch Review*, and in the anthology *Eight American Poets* (London: Villier Publications, 1952).

ROBERTA ENGLE PETERS grew up in the West: high school and business college in Wichita, Kansas; four years of night classes in art at Denver University; night courses in short story writing in Los Angeles. She has had about twenty stories accepted in the past two years, four in U. S. publications like *Woman's Day* and *Western Family*, and the rest in Canadian and English popular magazines.

ROBERT F. RICHARDS has taught English at Hunter College and at the University of Denver. In 1947 he

was Assistant Director of the University of Colorado Writers' Conference. During World War II he served three years overseas with the Air Force, one year in Washington as the Army member of the committee on Air-Sea-Rescue publications, and two years as Deputy Director and later Director of the Army program to re-educate German prisoners of war. His *Dictionary of American Literature* will be published this summer by the Philosophical Library, and he is now working on a study of Thomas Hornsby Ferril's poetry.

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL, poet and essayist, has received widespread acclaim for his writing. Among his awards are the *Nation's* prize for the best poem of the year (1927), Oscar Blumenthal prize presented by *Poetry* magazine and the Fine Arts Medal presented by the Denver City Club (1937), Academy of American Poets prize (1939), Top Hand Award of Colorado Authors' League (1949 and 1952), Ridgeley Torrence Memorial Award for best book of poems (1953). Carl Sandburg read "No Mark" on the "Cavalcade of America" program commemorating Pearl Harbor (1942); the Library of Congress recorded Ferril's reading of fifteen of his poems (1950); the Festival of Arts at Potsdam, New York, invited him to speak at the performance of the Effinger symphony based upon the poem, "Words for Time" (1954). Honorary degrees were awarded by the University of Colorado (1934), University of Denver (1947), and Colorado College (1949). Four of his poems appeared in the first number of *The Colorado Quarterly*, Summer (1952).

CECIL EFFINGER, Associate Professor of Music at the University of Colorado, has written over sixty major

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The love of this land

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

There is a poem of William Butler Yeats called *The Stare's Nest by My Window*—"stare" being west-of-Ireland for starling—which ends with these lines:

We had fed the heart on fantasies,
The heart's grown brutal from the fare;
More substance in our enmities
Than in our love; O honey-bees,
Come build in the empty house of the stare.

Yeats was thinking of another country and another time—Ireland and the Civil Wars of the 'Twenties—but there is not an understanding man or woman in America today who will not read these words as though they were written of us. We share the same guilt and we know it. With us in this country also the heart has been fed on fantasies—the most degrading of all fantasies—the fantasies of hatred. With us too the heart's grown brutal with the fare. And it is our tragedy, as it was the tragedy of those of whom Yeats wrote, that hatred is more real with us than devotion. The true indictment of our generation is precisely the terrible indictment of the great Irish poet: "More substance in our enmities than in our love."

A man who lives, not by what he loves but what he hates, is a sick man. And so too of a nation. We know it, all of us. The revulsion against our fears and hatreds and against those who have used them for political or economic advantage is mounting throughout the country. There is no reputable newspaper and scarcely a respected leader of the religious or moral or intellectual life of the Republic who has not condemned the exploiters of these miseries. We are coming to know the worth of that winter patriotism which measures itself not by its love for America and all that America means but by its mere passion against the Soviet Union. Condemnation of the Soviet Union is understandable enough. The whole country detests its doctrines and practices—the hypocritical protestations of that worst of slaveries which Communism is—the dishonest justification of the most fraudulent of

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means by the most contemptible of ends. But the country, nevertheless, finds it increasingly hard to believe that American patriotism consists only in the detestation of the Soviets. Above all, we find it hard to believe that that man is an American patriot who would sacrifice to the hatred of Russia the heart of what America is—the freedom of the individual mind and soul and conscience.

But though the temper of opinion in the United States has changed—is changing—the underlying evil has not changed. We still live by what we hate: the principal difference is that we are beginning now to hate each other. Those who would define American patriotism in anti-Russian terms, detest and denigrate those who measure patriotism in the United States by devotion to the cause of individual liberty. And those who judge patriotism by devotion to the cause of individual liberty detest and condemn those who would make a man's feeling about communism the measure of his feeling about the United States thus admitting the Communist dogma in reverse to the center of our national life. Not in our lifetime, and not, I think, since the War Between the States, has the American mind been divided by such bitterness as divides it now.

It is an understandable bitterness on both sides. Those who honestly believe, as some men do, that nothing matters in our time but the Communist conspiracy, readily persuade themselves that the believers in individual freedom are, at best, political irresponsibles and, at worst, defenders of Communists if not Communists themselves. The view is not confined to inhabitants of the lunatic fringe of fanaticism: there are extensive areas of the American press in which the word "liberal" is now a word of derision signifying a man or woman incapable of realistic thinking and ripe for the manipulations of the conspirators.

The same thing is true of those who believe that the great issue of our time is the freedom of the human individual:—who believe that, if this freedom is lost, no matter at whose hands, America is lost. In the eyes of these men and women, the faction which would sacrifice individual liberty to the fight against communism is no better than the Communist Party and may well be worse since it is far larger, and since the means it employs are immeasurably more dangerous. The Communist Party, though it uses the Trojan

Horse of pretended patriotism in other countries, has never been able to make use of it here because the country as a whole detests communism too thoroughly. But the faction which would sacrifice American freedom to the Communist danger suffers under no such disability. It has wrapped itself in the claim of patriotism to such a point that it has all but monopolized the American flag. Any man who opposes it, even when it strikes at the American Constitution, may expect to see himself attacked as an enemy of his country. And any man who defends the American tradition, the Christian tradition, of a free and responsible human spirit will be fortunate if he is not publicly vilified as disloyal and subversive.

So that the bitterness exists; and exists, on one side at least, with considerable justification. But the state of mind thus engendered—engendered by the obsessive character of our common hatred of Soviet Russia—engendered by the divisive hatreds of the two factions of opinion within the United States—is nevertheless an evil and destructive thing: as evil and destructive here as it was in Yeats' Ireland. And the real question for us, the question on which the vigor of our future may well depend, is the question his poem puts. How can the love of our own good replace this hatred of other's evil which is devouring our strength? How can we fix our hearts upon what is worthy of love instead of fixing them, as we now do, only upon what is worthy of hate? How can the honey-bees build in the empty house of the stare?

There are some, I know, who will regard these questions as idle or worse: men who pride themselves on their scientific detachment and who tell us that hatred and fear are the natural condition of mankind; that the ideals of a nation are merely the rationalizations of its terrors; that even the ideal of human liberty is nothing but a way of talking about some tyranny or oppression we detest. It is a fashionable view among those who would like to reduce human conduct to terms with which scientific theories of causation can deal, terms which exclude the inexplicable motivations of the human heart, but it is not necessarily a view which will appeal to everyone. For there will always be some to ask, even in a time like ours, how you can detest what stands in the way of your going unless you know where you wish to go—how you can risk your life in the destruction of the tyrant unless you believe in the world which the tyrant's destruction would make possible.

It may well be true that a great deal of nonsense has been talked about the American dream: that aspirations and ideals have been attributed to men who never knew them. But it is not true that our life as a people, during its great creative period, was a life motivated only by negatives. No one who knows even the basic geography of our discovery and conquest and settlement of this continent can believe that we were pricked on only by fear, or shunted along solely by hatred: that we crossed the sea merely to escape the ills of Europe and worked our way over the Alleghenies merely to escape the antagonisms of the seaboard and climbed from the great valley up across the high plains to the Sierras merely to escape the restrictions of the settled farm lands. It is too evident that we were drawn also by hope and by belief. Cortés there on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico with the unknown, unnamed mountains west of him and the fabulous city of Tenochtitlan beyond the mountains—Cortés burning his ships, burning his past, burning his retreat, is the American symbol. Generation after generation, men burned the past on this continent and moved on, not because they hated the past but because they had fallen in love with the future: not because they feared the east but because the west was farther on and new and not yet known. Whatever else moved the American people the west moved them, the unknown moved them, the future moved them. We believed in the future. We loved the future. And that love, that belief, shaped our history and ourselves.

The American dream may not have been everything American writers have called it, but that it existed, down at least to our own time, no one, I think, can fairly doubt. Even as late as the last generation, the American mind was fixed on America; on the conception, the idea if you will, the possibility, which the word America stood for. If Americans seemed self-assertive and overconfident to Europeans it was not in their capacity as men and women but in their capacity as citizens of this Republic that they seemed so. They were sure of themselves because they were sure of their country. And what they were sure of in their country was what their country would become—the fulfilment of the inarticulate promise which the continent made, which the west made, which the people made to each other. Americans of the first

American century did not live by hating the British or hating the French or hating the Holy Alliance: they lived by their passion for the thing they themselves were to be. They fought a terrible and bloody war among themselves to make certain that that thing should not perish from the earth. They believed in the direction in which they were headed. And they became, in the unbelievably short period of four generations or five—my mother's father talked to the last survivors of the war of the Revolution—the most creative and productive nation on the earth. There was more substance in their love throughout that time than in their enmities and from that substance they construed a nation.

Now I do not suggest that we could recover that confidence, that belief, by an act of will even if we could bring ourselves to put aside our fears and hatreds and attempt it. But I do suggest that it might be well for us, at this troubled and unworthy moment in our history, to consider what it was that men before us in this country loved. We talk easily, our generation, of America, of the United States, of the Republic. I suspect that we use these words more easily than our fathers or our grandfathers ever did. But what we mean by them is not always clear even to ourselves. Sometimes we would seem to mean no more than a place on the earth's surface; sometimes a particular religious or economic system; sometimes things the way they are; sometimes things the way they used to be before the income tax, or during the Nineteen-twenties, or, in any event, before Franklin Roosevelt. But it was none of these things—not even the last—the word, America, meant when it changed the history of the world. Men did not love that word, they did not cross the sea to find it, because it stood for a particular faith or a particular way of doing business, or a particular parcel of earth, or a particular moment in time. Men loved it and followed it because it meant none of these things: because it meant, indeed, precisely the opposite of all of them.

America was what had not yet happened but could be made to happen: what had never yet been found but what a man *might* find. It was possibility. It was openness. It was a beginning that should never be an end—a road out—a departure: in the language we Americans ourselves made use of in the Declaration of Inde-

pendence, a *pursuit*. And a pursuit of what? Of happiness. And what is happiness? A condition of mankind—a condition often approached but never achieved but never despaired of either. And what condition? The condition in which men are no longer mocked by the discrepancy between the dreamed-of and the real: the condition in which a life may be fulfilled. America, then, was a journey toward mankind—toward the realization of the hopes of men. It was a belief in the future—but of man's future—and a belief therefore and inevitably in man.

The proof is in the stated end and in the means also, for the means are freedom. America was not a guided tour, a pursuit directed by the State. It was a journey toward mankind in which each man was free to travel as he pleased—as the great journey toward the American West was a journey by many trails to a common country. A man was not only free to think for himself in the American conception, he was obliged to think for himself for if he did not there was no one else to do it for him. The State did not exist as State to direct men's lives and police their thoughts as it exists in Russia and as some, who claim to hate Russia most, would have it exist in this country. The church did not exist to dictate to men's consciences. What existed was men as men—which is to say, as individual human beings—joining themselves together in churches as their consciences, not the State, directed; governing themselves as they saw fit.

The end was man in America and the means was man and the belief was a belief in the possibility of man: not the dignity only or the worth but the human possibility of manhood. There were men undoubtedly among the founders of the Republic who did not share Jefferson's convictions—though they accepted his words and must, in common decency, be supposed to have understood what those words meant. There were men who opposed the Bill of Rights with its guaranty of individual freedom of mind and conscience. But the proof of a dream is not to be found in a document. The proof of a dream is to be found in its power over mankind. The question is not what John Adams thought—though he thought far more generously than some who profess themselves his admirers will admit. The question is what went through the minds of those millions of human beings who made their way

westward across Europe and westward across the Atlantic, often under conditions of the most unspeakable misery, to reach the American Republic. Was it only their suffering in Europe that sent them west? Was it only the economic opportunity of the new world? Would they have longed so to come if the United States had been such a country as Russia, with its vast unsettled provinces, its immense frontiers, now is?—such a country as Spain is under Franco? Not even the most cynical social scientist, I think, would say so. No, what drew men West across three thousand miles of sea from the farthest corners of Europe and Asia Minor to this continent was a dream of manhood, a dream of the brotherhood of men in freedom, a dream of the freedom of each man.

That dream was real—real as only the common dreams of a great people can be. And that dream we loved. And that love made us a nation. The economic and social conditions which the Marxists set up as first forces and prime movers are not the true begetters of societies and nations. And neither are the legal frames and formulas to which our lawyer-led Republic attaches such importance. Before there can be a constitution, before there can be an economic system, there must be a people. And a people—above all a new people in a new land—is not begotten by chance. The Greeks who gave their cities mythical origins in the meetings of girls and gods were wiser than we with all our scientific precision, for it is always in a myth of some kind that a nation—a true nation—begins. There were, it is true, forced settlements of felons on this Continent. There were also shipwrecks—men brought ashore by luck. And there were many who came for no better reason than that more money was to be made here in a year than at home in a decade. But it was not by these means that the forests were cut and the land settled. There was an American myth from the first days of the first colonies down to the great decades of the westward migration and the American myth was the myth of man. Intolerance there was, religious and moral and intellectual, but the intolerance could not stand against the myth for the myth was stronger—stronger and older too. The voyage of the Pilgrims toward freedom of conscience—freedom to believe as their consciences moved them—was older than the theocracy of Massachu-

setts Bay and long survived it. And the belief in man—the belief in the right of man to follow his conscience—was the real rock of Plymouth on which that voyage was brought to shore. It is no accident of historical chance that when the American spirit, after tongue-tied centuries, found a voice to speak with, the voice was Whitman's. The great poet invents nothing. He finds what was always there but too visible to see. Whitman found the dream of man and, finding it, gave a tongue to the Republic.

What we had loved for three hundred years was the fatherland Whitman found—the fatherland of the free human spirit. We believed in man—in man's right to think for himself and to worship God in his own way—and on that belief we founded a great nation. For the belief, we discovered, was justified. Men *could* think for themselves. They could govern themselves. They could think for themselves and govern themselves, not only under the conditions of Thomas Jefferson's agricultural economy but under the totally different conditions of the Industrial Revolution. They could think for themselves and govern themselves even in a world in which the philosophers told them the experts, the technicians, must do their thinking for them. We believed in man and, in consequence, we trusted each other and the trust was justified in the event. But underneath the event, and behind the trust, and farther back than the belief was the love: the love of man, the love of the human possibility, the love of which Lincoln's life was the great American expression.

It is this love which has now been clouded in our enmities, our hatred. We no longer fix our minds on the possible, on the future, on the fulfillment: we fix our minds on what we fear. And the result is that our trust in each other weakens and corrupts—is, indeed, daily weakened and corrupted by those who play upon our fears. With the inevitable consequence that our government of ourselves becomes more difficult: suspicion takes the place of determination, and a great part of the purpose and will of the people is diverted into the most degraded and degrading of public man-hunts and spiritual lynchings. The heart's grown brutal from the fare, indeed: the American heart which once saw visions.

How are we to recover ourselves? How are we to regain our manhood? I know of no way but by the recovery of the vision. It

is difficult in such a world as the Russians have made to believe in noble things. It is difficult, after what we have witnessed in Nazi Germany and chauvinist Japan and fascist Spain and communist Russia, to believe in man. But we have reasons in our own past to believe and we can recall those reasons. If we do not—if we permit our hatred of Russia to replace our love of the American dream as the motivation of our lives—we will have accorded communism the greatest triumph to which any dogma can aspire: the power to dictate the thinking even of its enemies. A nation as sure of its own convictions, as confident in its own history, as we were once and should be again has no need to live in the rejection of the faith of others. It can live in the affirmation of its own. God knows we have reason so to live, we Americans. Whether we have the power also depends not on our wills but on our hearts.

WILHELMINA'S LOWERING

By HAROLD WITT

Buried in some cemetery thick with stone angels
Aunt Wilhelmina barely begins to disintegrate
before the living, vulturous, swarm
over her once possessions, lifting
her house up clawlike with its cupid clock
and rattle her rafters for a cache of cash.
The grand piano is a contended bone
but the musician's morsel goes to a tone-deaf girl.
O Wilhelmina, so careful about stairs
and to keep the cat off your paling carpets,
over your roof of grass ravens are dropping
and realtors flick stubs on your floors like a stable.

The edge of twilight

ROBERTA ENGLE PETERS

Ellen laughed. The sound seemed alone and raucous in the still air and she stopped, conscious of it. One could forget about laughter in this wide, silent space, as one forgot that shadows could also be cool.

Eyes gleaming, the grey kitten crouched near her feet, a tiny feline hunter in ambush behind a few blades of the dry desert grass. Its pointed tail twitched with make-believe tension. Behind it, the yellow kitten came dancing sidewise on tiptoe, its pixie face wary. It lunged. Its front paws flayed the air and it pounced, a gay mischief-maker, on the twitching grey tail. The grey kitten leapt and wheeled in a single wild, jungle movement. Seeing only its brother it stopped short, blinked, then turned away and began to lick its paw in haughty disregard.

In his canvas chair under the smoke tree that grew, impossibly, where no living thing should be, Martin stirred and coughed. Behind him the jagged hills glowered in the white sunshine. Already, although it was still early morning, across the desert floor the heat waves formed their shimmering mirage of life-giving blue that was always just beyond.

The cough had not been there at the beginning. Only later, after he had learned of his illness, after he knew that he had learned of it too late, he had begun to cough in the strangling way that brought to her own body an answering physical weariness; after that they had planned to come here and had found this place, and she had made all the arrangements alone, in a merciful fog of incomprehension. And while the cough began, she had watched him change from a man of decisive thought and vigorous action to a petulant semi-invalid, a gaunt-faced stranger, whose lassitude was punctuated only by bursts of lashing bitterness.

In spite of the heat that seemed to stifle even her thoughts, the two kittens began to tumble over each other on the sandy ground. Yesterday there had been three of them tied in a sack in the shade

of the cabin, found there after the Mexican who hauled water was gone. Earlier this morning a family of Indians had come by and Martin had roused from his langour long enough to press one of the kittens, a black one with ridiculous white mitts, into the shy arms of a round-faced, oily-haired child. It was a small thing to do, unimportant, but so reminiscent of the Martin of another time that for a moment her heart pounded hopefully.

But he had said, his voice sullen, "They can't stay here. Cats carry disease. That one was lucky."

Now, watching the two kittens cuff each other in the sand, she tried to interpret the warning in his words, hopelessly, as one tries to interpret an unheard sound in the night.

Stooping, she picked up the grey kitten. She cuddled it against her throat and it twisted in her hands and licked her chin with its tiny, needled tongue. She smiled for the second time that morning and put it back on the ground near its brother. It wasn't true about cats carrying disease but all arguments ended in the wracking, pain-drenched cough.

Straightening, she drew a slow breath of the hot, dry air and moved toward the cabin. Behind her, Martin stirred in his chair but she did not turn to see if he rose or remained there.

It was a good cabin, built by some forgotten, industrious eccentric, its outside walls a double thickness of stone against the desert heat. As always, when she stepped inside she felt grateful for the dim, small rooms to which a trace of the night's chill still clung. It would vanish soon, but even an hour of coolness helped against the endless, monotonous heat of the day.

The largest of the three rooms was used for a living-room. In it she had put the few household furnishings she had chosen to bring, but they looked out of place and tawdry among the crude, sturdy furniture the room already contained. She walked through it quickly, without looking around, into the small, bare kitchen. Automatically, keeping her own dishes and Martin's carefully separated, she began to clear away the remains of their breakfast.

Martin did not like the powdered milk they used, and half the glass she had mixed for him still sat there. Carefully, because thrift was important now, she put it on the wooden shelf of the cupboard.

Martin came and stood in the doorway. Because he rarely moved from his chair under the smoke tree, her pulses quickened again. Remembering the Indian child and the kitten, casually, she turned to look at him.

He was watching her. She had a fleeting impression of something bright and intense behind the hooded listlessness of his eyes. Something that vanished at once from her sight.

He said, his voice low and even, "You hate it here, don't you?"
"Martin—please!"

How many times had he said it, just that way, and she had answered. But this time he turned, then, and left. She heard him move something in the living-room and, in a few moments, she knew he had gone from the house. She turned back to her tasks with a sigh that was almost relief.

Then the sharp crack of a rifle, twice in rapid succession, shattered the silence.

Heavy and pulsing, the stillness returned. The warning of his voice, the unheard sound she had groped for was there now, beating at her. *That one was lucky . . . lucky . . . lucky . . .* She heard a tinkling burst of laughter and knew, with sudden, sickening sobriety, that it was her own. She caught her lip between her teeth until she could taste the blood on her tongue.

When she moved again her knees felt stiff and she knew, without interest, that she had been standing there for a long time. She knew from the sounds, without seeing or caring, that Martin came in and replaced his rifle on its shelf above the door and then returned to his chair under the smoke tree. She was holding a cup. When she saw her hand begin to tremble, she put the cup on the little table under the window.

Her legs still moving stiffly, she walked through the living-room into the one bedroom and, fully dressed, lay down on the bed. The heat surged in now, in great waves, and she lay perfectly still until the swells of it merged into one. Then she opened her eyes and stared at the heavy, rough-hewn ceiling beams where the white plaster had fallen away.

After a long while she got up and moved slowly, one step at a time like a tired child who is lost, through the dimness of the living room to the open door of the cabin.

A few feet distant, near the clump of dry grass, the forms of the two kittens lay, the grey one almost on top of the other, its head a bright splash of crimson.

Martin sat in his chair, his arms hanging loose over the sides, his eyes closed.

Still moving slowly and with no conscious plan, she walked around the cabin to the shed in which a few tools were kept. She picked up a shovel and went back to where the kittens lay.

There was no sound except the sharp hum of some hardy insect and the scratch of the shovel as she thrust it into the hard, sandy ground. Martin did not stir. With no feeling, she made a hole large enough and, using the blade of the shovel, pushed the stiffening forms of the kittens into it. She moved the dirt back into place and, without pausing, started toward the shed. It was then that she heard another sound above the tiny clamour of the insect. She stood quite still and listened. It came more clearly, the faint, faraway cry of a kitten.

It was some trick of her memory. She looked at Martin, half expecting that he would have heard it, too. He did not move. His hands still hung loosely and his eyes were still closed, the deep lines of his face unaltered.

Moving more quickly now, she put the shovel back into the shed and returned to the cabin. As she entered the kitchen, she was suddenly and violently ill.

When her head had cleared and she could control her actions again, she dipped some water into a pan and washed her face and hands. A large part of the day had gone by, but she went dully about straightening the kitchen as though it were still early morning.

All the while she worked, she seemed to hear the kitten's frantic wailing. The first sounds seemed loud and nearby. She dropped a lid without knowing until she heard it strike the floor. Later the cries grew more and more faint and she found herself listening and tense.

Martin came into the kitchen and sat down near the window. She thought about his lunch, but she was unable to guess at the time and too weary to speak of it. She felt uneasily that he watched her whenever he thought she wouldn't know. Once when

she put her hand up to brush back the damp hair that clung to her forehead, she felt rather than saw the instantly concealed sharpness of his glance.

He was sitting there, hunched and silent, when the mewing came. She looked at him quickly but the listless lines of his face told her that he heard nothing, that there was nothing for him to hear but the sound of the tin lid when it clattered to the floor.

After he left the kitchen, glancing at her as he arose, seeming about to speak but saying nothing, she went into the bedroom and closed the door. There was no lock and, without knowing why, she moved a chair against it. A dark-framed mirror hung above the heavy chest and she glanced at herself as she passed. She returned and looked again. From her own face, the eyes of a stranger stared back, eyes whose lids opened too wide, so that too much whiteness was visible around the dark iris and the dilated pupils. She leaned forward and examined them. She closed them and opened them again, carefully, deliberately holding the lids so that they did not open wide. Then, with a sudden, sick realization, she bowed her head on the chest of drawers and pressed her face into her hands. Her body quivered but she did not sob.

After the trembling had stopped, she straightened and, turning, took off the thin cotton dress and the light shoes she wore. The mewing had never completely ceased. She lay rigid across the bed and threw her arm over her eyes as though to shield them. The kitten's cries seemed to come from everywhere.

Deliberately, she forced her body to limpness. Once she raised her head and looked out of the window at Martin, in his chair under the smoke tree, his eyes closed. It was obvious that he heard nothing. After what seemed like an interminable length of time, she began to imagine the sounds became less and less frequent until, finally, they stopped altogether. Some time after that, exhausted, she slept, a heavy, dreamless, unrefreshing sleep.

When she awoke, the sun's rays were long and slanting. The memory of the two dead kittens held all the surface of her consciousness. She moved wearily to the chair against the door and put it back in its proper place. She put on her dress and shoes, then walked unwillingly out of the bedroom and across the dusk of the living-room until she stood in the cabin door.

The distant mountains lay in their own sharp, purple shadows, their ridges bright in the late sunshine. The desert would be cooler now. A sluggish breeze stirred the smoke tree. Beneath it Martin still sat. While she watched, she knew gradually that something was changed, something had become different. She looked at him for a long time. His head was leaned back and his eyes were closed. His arms still hung at the sides of the chair.

Then she realized what it was. Although his arms appeared to hang loosely, his hands were clenched into fists. It gave his whole body, in exactly its usual position, an attitude of tenseness, of waiting.

Then she forgot about the breeze and the smoke tree and the clenched hands. The thin, vigorous wail of the kitten came again, just as before, from no particular direction.

Something happened inside her brain. She heard her own voice across the silence.

"Martin! Martin!"

With surprising quickness for a man so ill, he arose and came to her.

"Martin, do you hear it? Can you hear it, Martin?"

"Hear what, Ellen?"

His voice was unmoved, and one corner of her mind noticed that his hands unclenched themselves.

"A kitten. Listen, Martin! Listen! Can't you hear a kitten cry?"

"No. Of course not."

She hardly heard the words. It was the expression in his eyes that calmed her, made her hands loose their grip on his arm. It was a look she had never seen in them before, a live look of waiting and, impossibly, of clear animal triumph. It faded before her, and the dullness returned in its place.

Forcing quietness to her voice, she said, "I'm sorry, dear. It was silly."

She hesitated a moment, then turned away toward the cabin.

He did not go back to the smoke tree, though. He followed her into the kitchen and sat down on the chair that was not near the window. She began slowly to prepare their light evening meal.

The cries of a kitten still seemed to come. Each time, involun-

tarily, she glanced at Martin. There was no need to ask. The unbroken listlessness of his expression indicated plainly enough that he heard nothing. The palms of her hands felt cold and moist and a vein in her temple throbbed. Always, she knew that his eyes were on her when she looked away.

Because of her need to hear some human sound, even of her own making, she asked, "Don't you want the milk that was left from your breakfast? You're supposed to drink —"

"No! I don't want it! I don't want any milk."

But he was too late. While she spoke, she walked to the cupboard and opened it. The half-empty glass of milk was not there. When she looked around, she saw his startled eyes upon her. The listlessness was as removed from his expression as though it had never been. A muscle near his mouth worked spasmodically and was still.

Then beyond him, on the little table by the window, she saw the empty glass. It was all wrong. Had it been there earlier, when he sat by the table? She didn't even know. Then she remembered the cup. A cup should be on the table, where she had placed it, not the empty glass. And Martin hadn't drunk the milk. He would have told her when she asked. . . . Foolishly, while the pieces of a puzzle surged toward each other in her mind, she began to look around for the cup.

The mewing of the kitten came again, sharp and close. She caught her breath and moved quickly toward the window. His hand reached out and she noticed without stopping.

She stared at the floor and the frame of the window and the window sill until a part of the sill, a board at one end, drew and held her attention. It pulled loose easily, with only a little resistance from the three nails that had been removed and replaced, cleverly but not quite cleverly enough, in their original holes.

As she pulled the board up, the mewing ceased and one tiny, white-tipped paw thrust, clawing and frantic, out of the few inches of space between the double stone wall. She reached down and picked up the kitten, the third one that was black and white. As she bent over the aperture, she could see the cup which had held the little bit of milk that would still have been enough to keep the animal alive for a time.

Holding the kitten in her arms, she turned around. Martin had risen and stood watching her. His hands were rigid against his sides and drops of perspiration stood on his forehead. With the kitten purring ecstatically against her breast, she began to understand the hopeless horror and the bright, blind vindictiveness in his eyes.

She started to stroke the kitten, firmly, to conceal the trembling of her hand.

"Look," she said clearly, "it's the other kitten. The one we gave to the Indian child. It must have escaped and crawled in there somehow."

Although her lips felt stiff and her eyes stung, she made herself smile.

Then as she stood facing him, holding the unaccustomed smile steady, she saw the tight balls of his hands unfold slowly without flexing. The deep lines in his face changed and the glowing bitterness faded from his eyes until there remained only something helpless, that clung.

She put the kitten on the floor and turned back to the window. The sun had set, but across the dim pool of the desert floor its last rays caught at the jagged hills and tinged them with scarlet. Near the horizon a few wisps of cloud had formed, dark against the clean gold of the sky. They would dissolve. They meant nothing.

She felt capable now and strong, strong enough for them both. She picked up the board of the window-sill and began competently to put it back into place.

The long dimension in Ferril's poetry

ROBERT F. RICHARDS

A few years ago in the *Rocky Mountain Herald*, Thomas Hornsby Ferril proposed a gargantuan puppet show as appropriate for the stage of the Red Rocks amphitheater. The theatrics included jet planes diving from the sky and machine gunners exchanging fire from the two peaked rocks that sandwich the spectators. The final scene brought a huge dinosaur on stage to turn and say to the audience, "I forgive you."

Ferril's persistent theme is *time*, but his awareness of geological history gives the time theme a new dimension that dwarfs those historical manipulations which go back only to the Roman Empire or the Trojan War. He is a man who always writes as if he had a dinosaur looking over his shoulder.

This dinosaur has troubled many critics and reviewers simply because they were unaware of his presence. He is the principal reason that they stumble over their own clichés when they attempt to classify Mr. Ferril. It is nearly impossible to make any of the categories assigned to contemporary poets fit a man who has a dinosaur at his shoulder instead of—say—Gregory the Great. And the fact that he cannot be typed makes him a difficult subject for an essay or a review. The critics have books in their libraries that tell them what to say about Eliot, Sandburg, Frost, Stevens, or Hart Crane. None tells them what to say about Ferril. His analyst must operate in a critical vacuum, deprived of the literary machinery which punches out an initial premise, at least, for the consideration of an Imagist, a neo-Humanist, or an American song bird.

The problem of placing Ferril in any category may be illustrated by reference to the most recent catalogue of our culture, the *Guide to American Literature and Its Backgrounds since 1890*. The distinguished compiler, Howard Mumford Jones, lists Ferril under "The West," between Andy Adams and Zane Grey. Certainly Ferril is, more than any other poet, "The West"; yet, he

is so much more than a regionalist that this geographical category functions only to list one aspect of his work. Furthermore, he has vigorously opposed every definition of western experience which sentimentalizes "the incongruity of the petty human element against the naked grandeur of God's handiwork," to quote a Jones dimension for this particular slot. The dimension exactly defines Zane Grey, but it exactly defines what Ferril is not.

It is my premise that Ferril needs to be defined, not in terms of what any other poet is doing, but in terms of what Ferril is doing. To my knowledge, no critic or reviewer has demonstrated a perception of his total intention, and it is this total intention—the whole cluster of his personal decisions as to what he wants his poetry to be and to do—that makes him unique. He has, of course, a great body of admirers, including Robert Frost, Bernard DeVoto, Carl Sandburg, and H. L. Davis, who do perceive his intention. But his critics and reviewers often lead his potential admirers astray by false definition. Even some reviewers of *New and Selected Poems* (1952) misinterpreted Ferril in the face of Davis's superb Foreword, which said more about his intention in a few paragraphs than all of the newspapers together have said in thirty years. Ironically, most of the reviewers tried to shower him with praise by comparing him to Whitman, who has inspired so many mediocre imitators that his name has become a pejorative label. This kind of praise alienates discriminating readers, who might otherwise discover and enjoy his work, and that is why Ferril needs to be defined.

I use the word *define* to signify the poet's literary conditioning and his literary objectives, not his literary quality. The definer asks, what is he, and what is he trying to do? The appraiser asks whether the combination of what he is and what he is doing produces good poetry. A complete criticism would include both, but where a complete criticism is not feasible, definition satisfies the immediate need. Inevitably, my admiration for Ferril's work will become apparent, but I shall not argue that matter. My argument is definition.

Many readers who have received only fragments of information about Ferril may wish to have his biography. More important,

however, his antecedents and personal history will provide an essential part of his definition, for he uses experience more often than literature as the basis for his poetry and theory.

Ferril amplifies the contemporary West by frequent reference to the history of the westering movement. Five generations of his ancestors took part in that history, and they frequently appear, unannounced, in his poems. We do not need to know that they are his ancestors to understand the poems, but the knowledge may help us to understand the poet. Western history is not an artifice for the manipulation of an American testament; it is a part of his awareness, something he learned intimately when he was a boy.

Jonathan Ferril, Tom Ferril's great great great grandfather, emigrated from the Greenbriar region of Virginia to Kentucky during the Revolutionary War, and was killed by Shawnees at "Baughman's Defeat" near Crab Orchard in 1779. His wife and his sixteen-year-old son, John, escaped through the forest, and later John fought in the Indian Wars of the "Dark and Bloody Ground." Ferril recalls in "American Testament" that "Kentucky was too dark and red with blood."

John Ferril's son, William, served as a chaplain with the Missouri militia and preached at Independence to the early trappers and plainsmen, who blazed the Santa Fe and Oregon Trails.

And a love song in Virginia was a tomb
That sank into the grasses of Missouri: . . .

And a love song in Missouri was a tomb
That sank behind the mountains of the West:

"The Gavel Falls"

William's son, Thomas Johnson Ferril, ran "Hornsby's and Ferril," a log-cabin furnishing store west of Lawrence, with his wife's father and brother, but in 1859

A civil war has started out in Kansas,
And all the West is blacker than the South.

"Fiftieth Birthday—1859"

Thomas served as chaplain of the Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry dur-

ing and after the war under the command of General Grenville M. Dodge.

Maybe you never heard of General Dodge,
General Dodge was the man with the festered cheek,
He came out West to build the Union Pacific, . . .

"Let Your Mind Wander Over America"

Thomas was the grandfather who told how old John Brown

Would hook one leg across the hominy block
And preach the birds off every tree in Kansas.

"Harper's Ferry Floating Away"

During the Indian Wars of 1865-66, Thomas administered to the troops and helped the wounded on a wide frontier that included Wyoming, western Kansas and Colorado.

. . . "One day out here the bugle sounded
For boots and saddles while my grandfather
Was blessing the Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry."

"Lodgepole Creek"

Thomas rode on a scouting party with General Connor and Jim Bridger.

Jim had a body that one morning took
A long pole in its hands and with a cry
That no one can remember strangely pushed
A hundred springing rivers down to mope
In folds of yellow sleep below St. Louis.

"Jim Bridger"

Thomas Ferril's son, Will Ferril, was born on the Lawrence homestead in 1855. In 1863, Quantrill and a band of about four hundred and fifty guerillas pillaged Lawrence, and Will was sent to hide and guard the horses.

"Hard," he'd say, "the war was very hard,"
Hard for a half-grown boy to hide in half-grown corn,
Hard to keep the horses quiet under a bridge, . . .

"The Grandsons"

These are the verses that came from the stories that Thomas Hornsby Ferril heard from his father, Will C. Ferril, curator of the State Historical and Natural History Society, and one-time soldier with the Colorado National Guard at Silver Cliff. In *Western Half-Acre*, Ferril reports that "I got so tired of hearing my father talk about the border-ruffian West of the Civil War that I found myself resisting all concepts of the West."¹ But when he needed these stories to amplify contemporary experience, they emerged as a part of his personal background.

Ferril grew up in the "House in Denver" on Downing near Twenty-second where he continues to live and to remember "looking cross-lots . . . over the evening thistle." In the neighborhood there were cock fights and gang fights and all of the adventures which make life meaningful. And

Out of the distances of Summertime
Came teamsters under apricot parasols,
So high, so stately moving
On the great green beautiful elephant sprinkling wagons
Raking the dust with rainbow tines of spray; . . .

"Some of the Boys a Little While Had Names"

Sometimes there were visits to the theater to see James O'Neill play *The Count of Monte Cristo* while his son, Eugene, turned the crank backstage that moved the waves. There were trips to the mountains on the old Colorado and Southern railroad. In Leadville the family visited the pioneer Gaws, whose dinner table is described in "Words for Leadville."

They called me in to supper: there were prayers,
And marmalade and venison and oysters—
"We thank Thee, God, for these, Thy bounteous gifts"
And polished lamps and perfumed ladies rustling,
And gentle bearded men and bright nasturtiums,
And there was beer and trout and cheese and milk.

Tom entered the East Denver Latin School in 1910, and he still can quote Vergil at the drop of an ablative absolute. Early each morning he mentally reviewed the conjugations as he carried

Route Twenty-four on *The Denver Republican*
From Cherry Creek to sunrise peddling down
The Mummy Range and the Never Summer mountains.

"Paper Boy"

He delivered the "Sunrise Edition" to Denver's patrician families; after school he delivered the *Times* to saloons and brothels.

At Colorado College he was a member of the Athletic Board and Student Commission, the chief cheer leader, and a distance runner with the track team. He wrote a column, "Line Plunges," for the college paper. He drove a wholesale milk route between four and eight each morning, and he served on the Phi Delta Theta pall-bearing team at seventy-five cents an hour, the lead-lined caskets being too heavy for the friends of the wealthy dead. He played the mandolin for half the cost of his meals.

By mandolins, by moon, by rhododendron
The boys change into warriors
And the continental masses drift and split.

"The Grandsons"

Ferril enlisted in an army cadet program at the college and earned a certificate in radio telegraphy. He was sent to the University of Texas for special training, and later to the Air Service School for squadron radio officers at Columbia University, where he was commissioned a second lieutenant.

After the war, Ferril became a police reporter for the *Denver Times*, but even in the first months of his employment he was writing drama reviews and editorials. He reviewed the performances of Galli-Curci, Pavlowa, Heifetz, and Rachmaninoff, and he interviewed Caruso, De Wolf Hopper, and Mary Garden. He predicted that the play, *Fair and Warmer*, "will never gain wide prominence through its production at the commencement exercises of theological seminaries." It was during this period that he began to use his middle name. George Holmes, city editor of the *Times*, noted the predominance of triple-threat names on the staff of the rival *Denver Post*: it had Walter Juan Davis, Courtney Riley Cooper and Eugene Parrott Fowler. Soon the city editor of the *Times* became George Sanford Holmes and his by-line

writers were required to sign themselves Lee Taylor Casey and Thomas Hornsby Ferril, an influence that soon extended to Clyde Brion Davis on the *Rocky Mountain News*.

From the time he was in college, Ferril had published poems in his father's small weekly newspaper, the *Rocky Mountain Herald*, and they were frequently reprinted in the New York papers and in the *Literary Digest*. Reviewing the *Anthology of Newspaper Verse* (1921) for the *New York Times*, Richard Le Gallienne called Ferril "one of the youngest and best of the sons of the morning." Joel Spingarn, the authority for the "new criticism" of that day, wrote a kind letter saying that the poems should be published in book form. Ferril entered them in the *Yale Series of Younger Poets* competition in 1926, and won the contest. They were then published as *High Passage* by the Yale University Press.

In this same year Ferril went to work for The Great Western Sugar Company, where he is still employed as publicity manager. He has edited company publications and produced motion pictures to promote improved agricultural procedures and the use of machinery among the sugar beet growers of the western states. Ferril's industrial occupation has been the subject of much tedious wonder among eastern commentators on the arts, who sometimes describe him as a "part-time poet," in contrast, presumably, to such a professional as Edgar A. Guest. He himself feels that industry is as fertile a ground for poetry as the English department of a university.

His particular industry gives him an awareness of science, which has enlarged the scope of his time theme. When soil study has taught geology,

You know where the hills are going, you can feel them,
The far blue hills dissolving in luminous water,
The solvent mountains going home to the oceans.

"Time of Mountains"

A poet who has studied animal nutrition may wonder

... if phosphorous or nitrogen
Can make air through my lips mean hell or heaven.

"Blue-Stemmed Grass"

Or if he has studied plant nutrition, he may say of the blue-stemmed grass in hand

"This part," I say, "is the straight untwisted awn,"
And "Here's the fourth glume of the sessile spikelet," . . .

"Blue-Stemmed Grass"

The science Ferril has come to know as a vocational instrument in the laboratories or on the experimental farms has perhaps contributed to the classical discipline in his poetry. In the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth predicted that "If science revolutionizes, the Poet will be at [the scientist's] side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself." Many of the later romantics, however, built up a dichotomy between poetry and the science they saw as merely a force toward materialism. The efforts of I. A. Richards to explain poetry in terms of science did nothing to heal the breach, and many contemporary poets who reject all other romantic attitudes retain a vestige of the Victorian sentimentality in their continuing rejection of "scientific materialism." Science may very well be a better guard against sentimentality than is the creed of anti-romanticism explicit in the "new criticism." For a characteristic of sentimentality is the uncritical examination or extension of fact, as demonstrated in the *pathetic fallacy*, or in the large bulk of western poetry which finds God in every "majestic" mountain. Not only his knowledge of science but the scientific attitude toward experience and fact protects Ferril from the romanticism which poisons most poets who regard western scenery. It poisoned even Whitman when he wrote "Spirit that Form'd this Scene" after seeing Platte Canon, Colorado.

Fourteen years before F. R. Leavis published *New Bearings in English Poetry*, Ferril wrote in the *Denver Times*: "It is not improbable that a stern classic reaction more rigid than the Augustan age is ahead of us." Only a few critics have noted that Ferril's mature work is closer to the "stern classical reaction" he predicted than to the romantic prophets of the American road. Most reviewers note his reference to the West, remember that western

writers are romantic, and blandly include Ferril among them. Reviewing *Trial by Time*, Alan Swallow wrote: "I will miss my guess if Ferril is not trumped up by the big popular reviews and thrown in the faces of poets who are his next of kin, not his enemies."² In a study of Ferril that he did not complete before his death, Donald Axton Clark noted that the first three words of "High Passage," the first poem in Ferril's first book, "are like an elemental motto set at the gate of Ferril's work to indicate its intention and its deep poetic import."

What pure coincidences were the day the bee
Crossed the black river and came floating further West: . . .

And Clark proceeded to note that "pure coincidence" is one of the multiple essences of the poetry of Shakespeare, of George Herbert in "The Pulley," of Emily Dickinson in "The Chariot," or of Allen Tate writing that "Time begins to elucidate her bones." For in poetry it is pure imagination which illuminates the disparate by exhibiting or suggesting coincidences.

Recently Peter Viereck delivered a "Survey of Modern American Poetry" at the Library of Congress, and he devoted most of his time to Ferril, who suffers "the same Frostian fate of wrong praise from middle-brow hacks and wrong neglect from avant-garde hacks." Viereck finds in a small group of Ferril's poems one very special emotion that he conveys "more movingly, more heart-breakingly than any other poet in American literature: the emotion of wistfulness."

Like Alan Swallow, Viereck is almost unqualified in his admiration for some of Ferril's poems while rejecting others, and both, I believe, have the same reason. Swallow sees a limitation in "the aural quality," while Viereck objects to what he calls "the combination of free verse and free-wheeling." Yet Swallow praises "Something Starting Over" as one of the best poems in *Westering*,³ while Viereck selects it as an example of a bad poem. These differences in critical taste or in decisions derived from critical theories are to be expected. Rolfe Humphries, who is a conventional lyricist, thinks that "Mr. Ferril's real gift . . . lies nearer to the area of the ironic lyric, to the personal and the strange, not to the great open spaces,"⁴ and he selects "Wood" for his praises. A

year ago I was dismayed to see a review of Ferril's *New and Selected Poems* in the *Denver Post* under the heading, "A Poem for Every Taste," but there may be some truth in this naive summation. Certainly he manages to please almost every critic with some poems, even though he consciously endeavors to satisfy only his own critical perception as to what is right for the job at hand.

He reacted against both Victorian and Georgian poetry, and he moved toward a neo-classicism, but he did this in his own way, independent of the parallel trend which is now called the "new criticism." The new critics do not merely specify a trend, they demand some conformity in the implementation of their ideas. Since Ferril does not conform to any critical system, he does not satisfy any of the critical fashions, but he coincides with each of them in a few poems. He has, by this coincidence, a poem for every critical taste. He can honestly be admired by other poets of such disparate tastes as Sandburg, Ciardi, Viereck, Humphries, MacLeish, Swallow, Frost, and the two Benés.

Viereck attributes the failure of Ferril to win the critical recognition he deserves to the fact that he has not

compromised with the mechanized neo-conformism to which modernism and avant-garde have degenerated. Through changing fashions, Ferril has remained true to himself;—no wonder none of the *doctores subtiles* of the new Alexandria have ever explicated him. . . . It is high time for the serious quarterlies to study adequately the word-music in Ferril, whether favorably or unfavorably.

Viereck is absolutely right in saying that Ferril needs to be criticized. It is a need that Swallow has also recognized. If it is to be favorable criticism, it must be an analysis of his quality, not lazy praise. He also needs to be criticized to the limit of each critical system, even though each system would find only a minority of his poems to praise. Once the critics get to fighting among themselves about what they think is good, once they come to examine their own predilections or theories and are forced to defend them, they and their readers will begin to see what Ferril is doing. When they discover what he is doing they will have a better right to ask whether they like what he is doing. The critical systems might suffer from an encounter with Ferril's work, but he is too strong to be damaged by them.

It is not the purpose of this article to engage in critical battle, but a few observations, mainly factual, may help to define Ferril as a poet:

WORKING METHOD: Ferril does not write carelessly or rapidly. In contrast to most contemporary poets, he publishes only five or six poems a year, and each is usually the product of weeks of labor through innumerable drafts. He can write a sonnet for an "occasion" in five minutes, and a few of his poems have been completed in a single draft, but he does not release any poem until it satisfies his critical specification. Sometimes he seeks a casual, conversational style; it is his specification for the poem at hand, not fast or loose writing.

INFLUENCE: No poet in America today, to my knowledge, writes in a greater vacuum of influence. In college he was influenced by Victorian poetry, and he wrote his early poems in the conventional, nineteenth century style, but the only vestige of this pattern appears in his capable use of conventional prosody in his lyrics. Of the many poets who are assumed to be his patterns, he has respect only for Frost and Sandburg, and the latter recently named Ferril as one of the poets who have influenced him.

PROSODY: He strives more for audio than visual word-music, and his composition is closer to Hindemith than Tschaikowsky. His carefully constructed interplay of vowel, consonant, syllable, word, and line is too subtle for the casual reader to perceive, but it emerges as music when the work is read. The reader does not enjoy Ferril's technique; he enjoys the results of the technique. This is in contrast to those contemporary poets who emphasize the intellectual, not in what they say, but in how they say it. Such a casual sentence as

You don't see buffalo skulls very much any more
On the Chugwater buttes or down the Cheyenne plains, . . .

"Something Starting Over"

is carefully orchestrated with respect to the cadence and position of the five "uh" sounds as they bump against the vowels. He selects meter, rhythm, and tone to match each subject: a square dance poem has a square dance rhythm, an elegy is lyric, a prairie scene is as bare of decoration as an endless field of wheat, and if

the setting is cacophonous, so also is the verse. He is a complete master of his technique. He does what he wants to do after great deliberation. What he wants to do is not what Eliot, Frost, Stevens, or Sandburg want to do, or what some critics want Ferril to do.

THEME: His theme is not "the West." The West is a springboard, an objective correlative in the structure of his ideas. His only consistent theme is *time*, and most often, wonder at the significance and coincidence of time. He rarely uses the word *time* in the poems themselves. He uses a river willow dipping and springing back, or 186,000 spruces per second, or lava cooling. Time is not an abstraction, it is a concrete dimension. He expresses the time dimension in terms of modern physics:

Where nothing can go faster than the light
That let me love that magpie's wing tonight: . . .

"Words for Time"

He uses geological "Time of Mountains" to avoid the sentimental or sensational clichés so prevalent in the sweet poetry or rough narrative of most western writers. The continuity of time is shown, however, in the continuity of man, and not through inanimate material.

STYLE: He uses wit and irony as devices for keeping his perspective, but style inevitably incorporates the poet's unpremeditated personality, and Ferril's is composed of humor and love. For all his perspective, most of Ferril's poems are "love" poems in their final impact. It may be love of Jim Bridger, or of City Park Lake, or for what is happening, or simply love of the wonder he has for what is happening. The moon is not a lemon rind but

. . . a sand lily petal floating down
Behind the blue wall of the Rocky Mountains.

"Waltz Against the Mountains"

ATTITUDES: As in his best prose, he avoids any association with labels. The dinosaur, mentioned earlier, would not stand for his supporting a political or social cause. Perhaps his *Childe Herald* column, which he writes for his family heirloom, a weekly "legal"

paper called the *Rocky Mountain Herald*, acts as a catharsis to relieve him of the arguments that clutter the verse of less fortunate poets. Although he feels that poetry should have something to say, he also feels that "messages" do not lead to good poetry. Messages to the effect that life is sterile are no better than messages on birthday cards to the effect that life is a bowl of roses. In 1944 a reviewer for *Poetry* magazine criticized *Trial by Time* for its lack of emphasis on "today," which she saw as a failure in responsibility. A year later the bombing of Hiroshima revealed that Ferril had been far ahead of his day. His poem, "Sunrise Edition," headlines "Pliny Injured Lighting Lamp with Uranium," and in a second poem, "Planet Skin"

Is festering pink
Where protoplasm
Learned to think.

PROPHECY: He has often been called a "myth maker," but this is sheer nonsense. He is a myth watcher, a critic of myths. He sees the inevitability of myth, and he examines the good myths that give us stamina and the dangerous myths that lead us astray. He recalls the myths of Athens as parallels to our myths. "Sunrise Edition" was published a decade before Piltdown Man was conceded to be a myth, or before Eniwetok demonstrated that "*Hydrogen's heavier than hydrogen*." Usually his prophesy is a less startling apprehension of the future through an apprehension of the past and the present. He is not the Whitman type of religious prophet, shaking his long white beard and pronouncing universal generalizations; he is the quiet prophet of the laboratory, examining the universe in the test tube of his western half-acre.

These categories may help to define Ferril as a poet, and to correct certain misconceptions concerning him, but they do not combine to make a definition of his poetry. Aesthetics can never be defined satisfactorily except by aesthetics: a good poem about Miss America would define her beauty far better than the measurements taken at Atlantic City, and Ferril's poems define his poetry far better than any analysis. Some general remarks concerning his work, however, may help to bring the categories together and create a more unified impression of his poetry.

He examines "The Long Dimension" with the objectivity of a scientist and the love of a poet:

The lava cools,
The blue ice comes and goes,
The forests rise and wander,
The boys spin wooden tops, the finches sing,
But never a maple cries to be young again,
Nor sediment of river turns to stone
With lamentation: *It should be otherwise . . .*

Consider the length of the dimension covered by the first four lines, which bring the reader forward at the speed of light so casually that he seems almost to be loitering. This is an example of a device Ferril uses perpetually: the balancing of opposite qualities. The slow pace in the rapid progression is achieved by slow verbs and phrases—"cool," "wander," "turns to stone"—and by the leisurely rhythm slowed by the "l" sounds. This is a technical balance, but he achieves a thematic balance later in the poem.

A beast will go to sleep and seem to dream
The scentings of a twitch of history,
But ours, a longer loneliness to measure,
For a man is neither a maple nor a panther,
He can desire a woman,
He can desire an island,
He can make words for woman and for island, . . .

Objectivity and love combine to celebrate an appreciation of the inevitable, and there is no complaint that man should be otherwise. There is no message. Through a balance of observation, the poem achieves a passionate apprehension of experience, which is Ferril's definition of what a poem should do.

The first three lines of "The Prairie Melts" are a preview in short dimension of a longer dimension coming in the poem.

The prairie melts into the throats of larks
And green like water green begins to flow
Into the pinto patches of the snow.

Again there is the technical counterpoint: the dumb and solid

prairie *melts* into *sound* of larks and as a liquid *flows* into the patches of snow, snow being the prairie that is melting, but melting here into itself. *Pinto* suggests a pony feeding on green grass. The prairie melting is an apt metaphor to describe the sound of the meadow lark. The larks arrive when the snow melts. A complete explication of these three lines, balanced against the whole poem, would reveal at least eight metaphors overlapping and intertwined. When we are told six lines later that "A mountain range ago the sea was here," we remember "green like water green" as a part of the preview of "The winged fins, the birds, the water green." At the end of the poem, after contemplation of love and the myth for spring, the future is balanced against the past of a mountain range ago:

Yet there could come a child
A long time hence at sundown to this prairie,
A child far-generated, lover to lover,
Lover to lover, lover to lover over . . .

The poet brings the child to the prairie because there is no "policy of rock" to answer his question,

My tilted skull? My socket eyes? Are these
With chalk of steers apprenticed to the grass
When mountains wear away and falcons pass?

Ferril remembers more than he remembers. Memory of the past and memory of the future focus upon himself as an example of man. In "Words for Leadville" he remembers

The blood of time, the wincing of the earth,
The spasms of the ranges wrinkling down
Into the silver crucibles of lead, . . .

and after he has recalled the entire history of Leadville, geological and anthropological, he asks what it means.

What latch to lift? What step to take uphill?
The ranges fold the hay into their blueness,
The blossoms drip with night, the planets rise
Into the ordered schedule of my hunger
For what has been, continues, and will be.

There is no meaning except the cumulative impact of the poem, but it is practical to examine the town in terms of whatever custom you have "for shaping ruins into thresholds."

And if you have a watch, your watch will tick,
And you can count the beatings of your heart,
While roots of ferns are splitting particles
Of time from granite and the corpuscles
Of blood within you alter their confusion
A tombward instant irrevocably.

If we select from the categories his *time* theme, his objective attitude, and his personal capacity for love, then consider his use of balance to achieve poetic meaning, we may derive a working definition, at least, of his poetry. It is classical in tone and concept, as it avoids the sentimental or didactic meaning. It is metaphysical in the balancing of metaphors and ideas. Love adds a clean touch of romanticism, adds passion to the apprehension of experience.

Perhaps this definition of Ferril's antecedents, personal history, and work will seem incomplete without some comment on what he is like as a person, although his personality is irrelevant to any appraisal of his poetry.

He likes to work with tools, and is a nagging perfectionist whether building a poem or a pump house. He is a snob toward the pretentious, but never toward his Negro neighbors or the people he meets over a juke box. He catches fish in impossible streams by asking how he would react to the fly if he were a fish.

When, as a total stranger, he meets you on the streets of Boulder or Steamboat Springs, he may come up and clasp your hand and exclaim, "Why, George, how nice to see you again, and how is Mabel?" Do not be dismayed; he pulled the same act on three other strangers a minute ago down the block. He may bring a perfectly innocent man to your house, and take you aside to ask that no mention be made of homicide because the chap was just released from San Quentin. If you are a Dante scholar, he may knowingly confide that the poet called his epic simply *The Comedy*. If he appears at your formal party in his fishing boots

and announces that he knows you would have invited him had you realized that it was his birthday, welcome him warmly, for he is in rare fettle and your evening will be a success, but do not scrounge around for a present. His birthday was February 25.

As I said, none of this matters. What matters is that Tom Ferril is the only great poet to use "Western" experience as a spring-board for a compassionate apprehension of human experience through its multifarious erosions and rebirths of wisdom. He is one of the few poets anywhere to keep his composure in the face of the twentieth century—never retreating for comfort into cults of extreme pessimism or creeds of artificial optimism. Having this dinosaur for a pet, he is the poet of "The Long Dimension," and

Tomorrow is too plausible forever
where the wind is,
where the sea is,
Yet can a man behold
beyond the trash-rack capsule of one planet
more than his epitaph a glacier cuts.

"Tomorrow Is Too Plausible"

FOOTNOTES

¹Thomas Hornsby Ferril, *I Hate Thursday* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946), p. 178.

²Alan Swallow, reviewing *Trial by Time*, *New Mexico Quarterly Review*, Autumn, 1944.

³Alan Swallow, "Two Rocky Mountain Poets," *Rocky Mountain Review*, Fall, 1938.

⁴Rolfe Humphries, reviewing *Trial by Time*, *New York Times*, April 23, 1944.

Four new poems

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL

ARROYO SECO

The tip of my boot pries up adobe slabs
Like turtle backs that floor this crusted draw,
There's armpit shade for a tick of artery,
Shade for the under-tong of a lizard's claw.

Good measure here, no rose, no silk, no music,
No starlight on our lips too parched to press,
Of all the yonders passion interposes,
Suspended, even transitoriness.

I scuff the clay, it powders up like powder
Poked from a dried-out puffball in the sun,
No lightning scribbles water in the haze,
No cool wine can be struck from any stone.

Would you be surer trailing the snowy ranges?
Wandering forests deeper green than the sea?
Lotos languor or Hymettan fountain
Enchanted far ago and far from me?

SWINGING

Pendulum Boy

The pendulum boy hangs by his heels
On the schoolyard turning pole and feels
The great blue giants under the town
Swinging up and swinging down.

Boy and Girl

They face each other in the slatted swing,
They pump the bashful treadle with their feet,
They work up giddy parallelograms,
Forever equidistant, incomplete.

Oldest Ghost

He comes by orbit and by equinox,
He swings a thousand oceans to and fro,
He is the atom and the chariot,
The winter blossom and the summer snow.

THERE WERE INTERSECTIONS

There were hitching-posts, there were horses, there were buggies:
The plaster Indian on the mantelpiece
Listened to music all day all night long,
The gas jet of the broken chandelier
Was a pink-blue puff
And the plains had no horizons.

Umbered in meditations of narcissus,
Ambrose stayed in the house and played the piano.
He could make up tunes to go with *who can balance*
A drop of dew on this nasturtium leaf?
He could make a dirge for twelve albino nuns
Licking the dashers from meadows of strawberry sherbet.
Ambrose could snap his piano like a slingshot:
A warm bat squeaking dead slides down the sky.
Ambrose could horseshoe angels on his piano,
He could dangle their red-hot claws to hiss like snakes
In the blacksmith's bucket under the piano.

He could play the soapweed in the vacant lot:
The burro's hackamore is caked with starlight.
He could play the milkman's foot on the piazza:
Lost owls gnaw the tugs from the milkman's horse.
He made up many tunes for killing himself
For an onyx nymph on a hilltop plumed with yews.

Ambrose shot himself with a thirty-eight:
The newel-post gave as they carried Ambrose down,
His piano, pedal to hitch-pin, made no sound;
The arc-light man on his bicycle changed the carbons
In the arc-light on the corner, then he jerked
The rope up like a noose and the nighthawks squawked.

There were intersections: Ambrose, horizontal
In the basket on the way to the embalmer's
Criss-crossing points of time that zig-zag lines
That generate the planes that form the wakes
Each body leaves in space from here to there,
For the air is tighter than linen tightest woven
With trailings of our passage.

The air is opening

Like a woman and the air forever closes
Like lips eroding into salient desert.

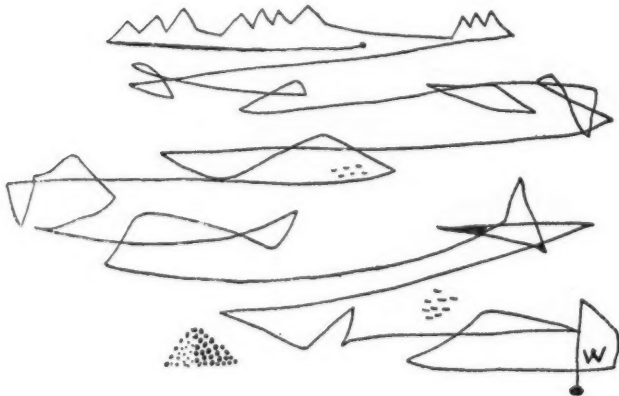
Intersections: ear-drums of the milkman,
Impact of Ambrose-air, piano jostled;
The milkman hummed a catch of air six Aprils,
Some tune he hummed, he didn't know where it came from
Any more than he knew the flicker of agony
A cottonwood shadow had hackled into it.

LULLED BY WITHERS

Splitting the thistle, my horse is the prow of a ship,
He plows up spindrift showers of grasshoppers,
What a ruffle of crackle dusting the stirrup lustre!
What snap of whirr, what wings, what whisperers!
And there in the grass ahead the planets cluster,
There do the hills uncoil like a bullwhacker's whip.

Between the shoulder bones at the base of the neck
Of the horse is a rhythm of ridge my fingers press
Now left, now right, now up, now down until
Through fusion with each alternating stress
I'm lulled into a dual principle:
Good and evil are clear as white and black.

Do mountains get their meaning from the plain?
I watch one forefoot rise, the other fall,
And down the bridle rein the silence sings
How man and woman are reciprocal;
I have to spur up a jerk of grasshopper wings
To spring the horse off toward the truth again.



Ideas and comments

CHILDE HERALD

Thomas Hornsby Ferril is a widely-known poet, but he is also less than that—he is a columnist. For a brief, frenzied moment each week he is Childe Herald, commentator on the ways of the world in his famous legal weekly, the *Rocky Mountain Herald*, which passed its ninety-fourth birthday last May Day. Seven pages of the *Herald* are filled with legal notices, but on its front page the Childe and his wife, Hellie—she actually edits the paper—amuse and prod. The following selections are representative of the poet as essayist. For those readers who will want to subscribe, we quote the editors: "The subscription price is \$3.00. If you care to pay up, we shall be grateful; if you don't, you will continue to receive the paper anyway."

MARCH 31, 1951

Trial by television—and I think this is the most interesting angle of it—restored to modern experience something which has always fascinated ethnologists exploring customs,—a man's right to his own image, and whether his soul is doomed to an evil fate if a representation of his face becomes the property of somebody else. There's more to it than unfavorable publicity, for television hits a gangster harder than the first wet-plate camera hit the sacred king of Dahomey.

Showing the same business on a movie news-reel would be entirely different. It would be like looking at the movies of a football game after you knew who won: there would be a cushion of time. But here in television was stunning immediacy, events unfolding as they happened, in your own home, in the presence of you and your cat and your own unwashed dishes. Transfer of the witnesses' total being was complete and irrevocable.

The witnesses might have hung on to their souls better if they had known more about Congo taboos against such violations. The taboos are sensible and well grounded, but the modern gangster is too refined; he doesn't live close enough to the jungle to know how it might protect him.

Trial by television can't help making you wonder whether justice isn't stampeded into the arts as fast as business and politics. I don't like to drag art into everything I write, but when it lies

like a cottonwood log across every road you travel, you might as well recognize it.

It used to be that art came late in life. If a man made a pile of money he would then take up art for social reasons and do pretty well with it as an ostentatious hobby. That accounts for most of the great art collections in America today. But today, if a man is to succeed in business or politics, he must lose no time in getting into the arts with both feet.

The business executive spends half his time making decisions regarding design, color, form, music, drama and poetry. It all comes about through competitive advertising, and trying to live up to it or down to it. Whether it's what color a bubble-gum wrapper should be, or what play United States Steel should put on next Sunday night, don't think it isn't a high-level decision. Advertising agencies are popularly credited with making these decisions, but how does management protect itself against the agency? The boss likes to pride himself that he can. Whether the account runs into thousands or millions, it's always money down a rat-hole unless somebody can prove why it was spent right. Art controversies in museums aren't a whisper to what happens every day in business. Budget-wise, the right singing commercial is as important as the right boiler-house.

The politician is in the same predicament. By no accident did John L. Lewis learn to talk on the radio like Forbes-Robertson. He had to study to be an artist. Regardless of what other circumstances made Roosevelt popular and Hoover unpopular, consider Roosevelt's radio artistry alone. As Hamilton said of Major Andre, "his elocution was handsome." He too worked hard on it. But radio was just a shove. Television now demands the complete actor. The bungler is washed up if he thinks he can do it straight, and if he wants to capitalize on naivete he soon finds that it requires superior genius. The art of Will Rogers or Huey Long was more difficult to achieve than that of Laurence Olivier.

It isn't exactly news, but radio and television remind us again with the subtlety of a 15-pound sledge-hammer (I like to mention the hammer because I got one this week, also a six-pound single-jack) that all the world is a stage. Yesterday I was talking to a new boy in the office. He was a veteran and I asked him what

theater he fought in. After he was gone I kept thinking over and over about the etymological rightness the centuries had poured into that common war word "theater."

JULY 14, 1951

It almost seems preposterous, doesn't it, to be talking about continuity these days. More than 200 books of poetry have come my way over the last three years and it is clear that more poets are convinced that civilization is doomed than feel otherwise about it. The principal certainties concern discontinuity, crisis, degradation, catastrophe, yet even these apprehensions are no longer dominant themes; rather do they appear as climate or atmosphere. Poetry at mid-century is tending toward formalism.

The safest course, to many writers, is to seek sanctuary in tradition. Religious tradition is found to be very hospitable—and what could be better for receptive people. But as for creative people of integrity, I don't see how they can get along with themselves seeking this sort of sanctuary, for sooner or later they have to encounter the creative minds of men who caused tradition to get started. The fathers of tradition are always lively, reckless and forward-looking. In religion they are pinned to crosses, burned alive and they dangle from hemp ropes.

What would the founders of any powerful tradition be saying and thinking in the year 1951? If a man wants to sponge on their companionship he should earn the right by first answering that.

But I don't intend to talk too much about continuity. If my convictions don't come out through the poems I've written over a number of years, new words thought up now won't help.

AUGUST 4, 1951

The puzzling thing about Korea, China and Europe is that whatever we do is controlled primarily by what is politically possible within America itself.

However we define our international motives—and we always think of them as benevolent and defensive—there's a strange tug-of-war going on in the American conscience. We keep reaching out for world power that we hardly seem to know we're asking for and, at the same time, we keep trying to pull in our horns to

appease the voters in Waterloo, Iowa, who are becoming ill-tempered about footing the bill. Both tensions, going in opposite directions, will continue as long as the Russians (who are on the make) and we (who are on the make) are scared to death of each other.

It's supposed to be wrong for our foreign policy to be so much influenced by the vote of the guy who runs the filling station in Waterloo, but it's just as wrong to feel wrong about it. Much that we cherish as freedom is implicit in these stresses, contradictions and apparent absurdities. Variety is salvation.

The fate of the Chinaman, Pole or Arab may not be improved materially by American lobbying, log-rolling, baby-kissing and the caucus in the saloon, but the world at large would be ten times worse off if we destroyed these customs which we condemn.

What wouldn't any human being in the slave countries give (if he still has any sensations of freedom at all) for the right to do a little lobbying, ward-heeling, caucusing and ringing doorbells to elect some wind-bag who calls himself "the people's choice"—and, thank heaven, even at his worst, turns out to be.

SEPTEMBER 15, 1951

There's something disappointing in our tentative victory over Communist propaganda in our own land. The long success of this propaganda was due to our own traditions of honest egotism. We flattered ourselves by thinking that when the Communists used our words they meant our meanings. Now we know better. We know that a Communist uses any word precisely as a plumber uses a blow-torch,—for what it's worth anywhere it will work. So we are no longer beguiled when the Communists speak of "peace," "democracy" or any of our time-hallowed concepts that go back to the Magna Charta.

They can't trick us any more and we're proud of it. Which is disappointing because it makes me think of my dog who learns a lesson the hard way but can't seem to generalize from it. I'd like to think that, in opening our eyes to Communist misuse of our dearest symbols, we'd have brains enough to protect ourselves against our own misuse of them. But read the headlines or turn on the radio! In the name of "freedom," "defense," "democracy,"

"peace" and all the other sacred words in the high glossary, we are willing to invite bankruptcy at home and world-wide dissipation of our resources,—exactly what the Communists want us to do.

JANUARY 19, 1952

Wednesday evening, this is, and we're bound for the stock show in about an hour. Meanwhile, if I had time and brains, I'd like to write a column lamenting the passing of the Republic. I mean the word itself, Republic with a capital R. As I listen to the political spellbinders on the radio, regardless of their allegiances, everything is Democracy. In the name of Democracy the Democrats whoop it up that all the Republicans are dirty tools of Wall Street out to skin the common man, while the Republicans, out to preserve Democracy, repeat Bob Ingersoll's dictum that the Democrats have only two objectives—"grand and petit larceny."

In older times "Our Noble Republic" came first. The leather-lunged orators swore by it on the Fourth of July and by November torch-lights. I'd like to see them come back to it, for we are still too young, as republics go, to let the concept go by the board. The idea of a republic lasted some 550 years in Greece and about 500 in Rome. Venice stuck to republican forms for twelve centuries. But such longevity may have had something to do with the smallness of Venice as a community. Physical expansion seems more congenial to imperial demagogism. FREEDOM-LOVING men have always cherished the concept of the republic. Democracy, as a concept, has had its ups and downs. From Aristotle to Edmund Burke the idea was reiterated that democracy was charged with self-destruction. Marx re-stated it. And Hitler was certainly the messianic creature of Demos in frenzy.

You get nowhere, or almost nowhere, by looking up definitions of democracy and republic. Both words cover more ground than a circus tent. The Soviet Union is a union of "Republics."

The word democracy was anathema to communists in the 1920's but by the 1930's they were standing up for democracy from hell to breakfast simply because the word had become so popular in our own glossary and it was now their strategy to pay lip-service to our most revered symbols.

Politically we have made two attempts to emphasize the idea of the Republic over all others. It began with Jefferson who was against strong centralized bureaucracy and believed in the rights of the states and the dignity of men as people. Jefferson founded what he called the Republican party. Later, to emphasize what Jefferson had been driving at, it became known as the Democratic-Republican party. Then in accordance with Dr. Samuel Johnson's recessive principle, the word Republican was lopped off and the party became the Democratic party.

The emphasis on the Republic came again in 1854 through a coalition of minority groups opposed to the extension of slavery and piecing together what remained of Whig and Federalist traditions. This led to the election of Lincoln as a Republican and the Republican party as we know it or don't know it today.

It may be splitting hairs (and that's how columns of words are made) but I like to think of democracy as an attribute of a republic, a condition inherent in one and I'd feel a little better if the spellbinders would get back to "Our Noble Republic" now and again. If they thundered it often enough they might even get to believe it as Jefferson did. Anyhow, it would be a novelty.

MARCH 22, 1952

Feeders' Day at Fort Collins is always interesting. I went up with Jack Maynard who started it back in 1921. Anywhere from 500 to 1,000 farmers and feeders always show up to look at the animals in the experiments and hear the preliminary reports.

Scientific reports always have to be preliminary as all-get-out. To come right out and say something for sure is not scientific. If you were Methuselah and worked 800 years on pink-eye as causing temporary blindness in calves, you'd have to come up with a preliminary report; otherwise your colleagues would give you the bum's rush. In Science, finality is ostracism. But this is not fair to the Fort Collins boys because they can't make final reports on their critters until they have been sold, slaughtered and graded.

At Feeders' Day all you can do is study the rations, look at the animals and hear what the experts have to say. But you don't need any experts to tell you the temper of the feeder's mind. Lamb feeders are taking a real licking and cattle feeders will lose,

maybe break even, or make a slight profit depending on how well they know their business.

The old-timers, who feed year in and year out, take these upsets in stride, but the opportunists who have been coasting uphill for ten years, making good money whether they knew a bale of hay from a cream puff, are the ones who are getting leery. Meanwhile, the American housewife is overjoyed at the prospect of cheaper meat. To the city person, as one speaker put it, the man who raises or feeds animals "is selfish, arrogant, greedy and rich."

Well, I wish I knew more about it. When you try to chase the total digestible nutrients through the enzyme-festooned alimentary tracts of the lowing herds and come up with the right bloom and the right dressing per cent and the right market at the right time, it is, as one might say, a bit bewildering.

In these feeders there is an amazing mixture of theory, practical experience and intuition. Maybe intuition isn't the right word, but when a fellow who may not know Vitamin A from a frog farm, can feed out thousands of cattle as intimately as if each one were his only baby—always doing the right thing at the right time—it comes down to something like absolute pitch in a musician or Leigh Hunt's ability to tell a perpetually good poem from a bad approved one.

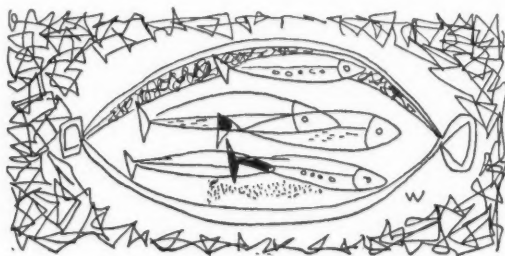
And as for critical lingo, nobody addressing a Picasso, so as to be overheard, can compare with a feeder who has finally followed his animals from the killing floor to the cooler and comes up with "Look at that eye of beef! Such marbling!"

APRIL 19, 1952

As one who bemoans the loss of the school of architecture at the University of Denver, may I view with alarm something far more serious—the course in fishing which has been announced with considerable fanfare this past week. This is radical and subversive; it undermines a great American tradition. America was brought up on the irreconcilable enmity between going to school and fishing. Playing hooky had one and only one sacred objective,—to go fishing. It was ancient long before Huck Finn immortalized it. But now I ask you, Al Jacobs, what in hell does Huck do if he wants to play hooky from the fishing class? Does

he call on the chancellor to contemplate the Pythagorean doctrine of metempsychosis? Does he whisk over to the social science kiva to mull over the conquest of despair through fealty to transcendentalism? Holy Jumping! What have we come to, Al? Apparently, the notion that anything that has to be learned can be taught.

Fishing must be taught and learned, but not, Al, in the classroom nor in any outdoor extension thereof. Here again we are confusing the mechanics of an art with its totality. I would go too far were I to suggest that even the mechanics can be dinned in by any academic procedure, for success in casting a fly depends in no small measure on the mood, the psychic climate that justifies the fisherman to his own gods. You can teach a bear to ride a bicycle; you can teach a seal to toot "Yankee Doodle" and you can teach a boy to hit a tire-casing at fifty paces with a Ginger Quill. But fishing must be taught by fish, by canyons, by friends who laugh, lie, ridicule and boast; it must be taught by getting away from school, by getting away from your responsibilities; it must be taught by willows wetter than river-water and the flickering tilt of the fireside flask at the starry end of day! Adios, Al. I'll never speak to you again unless you bring me a basket of trout you caught yourself, having won a C-plus on your final.



MAY 10, 1952

And if I may switch to standardization for a moment, may I mention one of the new fashions in philosophy. Over the past twenty-five years, it has been intellectually fashionable to repudiate or ignore the amazing variety of American experience. The machine age was supposed to be stamping us all into the same

pattern. This fallacy was well under way long before Sinclair Lewis began dinning the monotony of American sameness into our literature. Lewis Mumford was also taken in by it; in fact I can't think of many intellectuals who weren't. Same clothes, same radio programs, same architecture, same newspapers, same everything! Everybody alike!

Well, all that has now gone by the board. I have read at least six thoughtful essays since Christmas documenting the astonishing variety of American life, the ferment in our arts and sciences; nobody, we are now assured, is like anybody else; nobody fits a common mold. I'm glad it is happening, but I am sorry to see it dogmatized. I hate to see anything dogmatized. Dogmatizing liberalism has been a bad thing. Too many people who think of themselves as liberals have tightened into a callow, zombie-like trance and respond only to mechanical stimuli. A simple test is the word "McCarthy." A mummified liberal, instead of attacking McCarthy hammer-and-tongs, as any lively mind would do it, will blindly and defiantly defend to the last ditch anybody McCarthy attacks.

Our ideas about the atom are also undergoing fashionable revision. Modern man, we now learn, is not necessarily obsolete. The pictures show our soldiers moving right into the holocaust of Yucca Flats and not one of them, we are assured, is injured. The citizens of Las Vegas and Los Angeles are told not to worry about the atomic dusts floating through their atmosphere. It won't hurt anybody the way it would have in 1945. Atomic weapons, the military experts now tell us, are incredibly powerful, but still they are weapons. There must also be ships, planes, tanks, and many, many foot-soldiers. (The foot-soldiers still carry spears much like the spears used by Alexander and Hannibal. We call them bayonets.)

JANUARY 10, 1953

I've always been as bad as a physicist as I have as a naturalist. A week ago Sunday, finding the world too much with me late and soon, I went for a lonely walk up Platte Canyon above Waterton—a place where the wilderness is restoring itself. I had the whole canyon to myself and didn't meet a soul until I was on my way

out—one man on a horse who was looking for mountain lion tracks. For a half-day I was all naturalist. Except for an occasional cracking of river ice, like a pistol shot, which was very startling, there was no sound except the low, metallic “chuck-a-zee-zee-zee” of the chickadees working through the amber stalks of weeds.

With amazement I watched a water ouzel for half an hour. He kept diving to the bottom of the river through a break in the ice. Every fifth or sixth try he would come up with something in his beak, possibly the larva of some insect. He would go way under the ice and then come up through the same hole. If he'd missed it, he would have been swept half a mile down the river under the roof of ice. A water ouzel does not have webbed feet. He swims under water with his powerful wings. The naturalist in me was getting along superbly.

As I started down the canyon I cut a bundle of willow withes to put in the big yellow jar above my typewriter. I would soon have pussy willows. And finally I found a lovely patch of what I knew must be snow-berries. They were very lovely, more beautiful than any mistletoe I'd seen at Christmas time. I cut half an armful of them and brought them home to go in the same yellow jar with the willow stems. That evening I put some of the berries in my lapel—marvelous things, really.

But I wasn't sure they were snow-berries, so I checked up with Bob Niedrach at Colorado Museum. Bob picked up the berries very gingerly with forceps and heaved them into the incinerator. “Devil's mistletoe,” he called them. “*Rhus toxicodendron*!” Poison ivy! Bob told me to take my berries very carefully to the ashpit, then wash everything with soap-suds and hot water. Which I did. And I scrubbed my soul and spirit with Tide, Vel, Rinso and every known detergent. Alas, I am not a naturalist.

JANUARY 31, 1953

So I feel quite competent to write a few lines about the Western temper or spirit at the moment. The urge to do it comes out of random conversations I had in New York a few days back. The curiosity Easterners have about this West of ours is certainly increasing. Perhaps war anxieties have something to do with it. The

West is looked upon as refuge and sanctuary and, as always in the past, a magnificent part of the world to live in. What's it like out there now? That question would bob up.

I could do little more than describe appearances, yet appearances, it seems to me, are fairly dependable. I could talk about the growth of our towns and cities, our expanding industries, the fantastic housing projects where I used to shoot prairie dogs with my .22 rifle. I could describe the encroachment of urban life on what used to be farm land, how the approaches to Greeley or Scottsbluff have so altered in twenty-five years as to make any old-timer feel like an alien in his own community. It is a feeling I often have in Denver, the city I have lived in all my life.

I could talk about Colfax Avenue as I knew it as a child and how, now, from Fitzsimons Hospital to Golden, it is practically a contiguous tissue of motels, shops, markets, houses. I could talk about the new skyscrapers going up, how it all looks out toward Arvada and the Rocky Flats and how the area from Denver to Boulder may soon be like going out the North Shore of Chicago toward Evanston and Winnetka. And I could talk a little about the suburban illusion—the traffic inconveniences of trying to get away from it all and the discovery that country life doesn't quite work the way it is supposed to.

But how about the spirit and temper of our people out here? Vague as those things seem to be, I think you can tie into some sort of generalization. Plainly, our temper is composed of the co-products of accidental success, with a high degree of arrogance and certainty. Business success has come so easy to so many people in this part of the country over recent years that they think and behave as successful people always do everywhere. They identify the fruits of luck with wisdom, and the mind makes curious transfers. I know a fellow who has made a killing in the furniture business. Only by considerable blundering could he have done otherwise, and now he fancies himself an elder statesman; he speaks slowly and thoughtfully on local and global problems, which is not grievous in itself—we all do that—but actually people listen to him, they take his advice, he has vision. Sinclair Lewis, you recall, said that vision was guessing which way the town would grow, which accounts for so many men of vision

among us at the moment, for nobody could have possibly guessed wrong on the growth of Denver had he staggered blindfolded any direction from the Civic Center. These lads are now in the dough; they think clearly, they are the arbiters of education, culture and civic improvement. They have a half-Nelson and hammerlock on the foreseeable future.

Then there comes to mind a broker who has made a great deal of money, an old friend I went through high school with. Last summer at a cocktail party he got plastered and began telling me what a lousy playwright Mary Chase was. (Forgive me, Mary, if you happen to see this, but I'm quoting him exactly.) Here was a poor dope, who never had had an interesting idea in his life but who had prospered through being on the ground floor in a mushrooming community—here he was making the customary transfer of authority that always happens to such people. By God, he was successful wasn't he, and it was the obligation of successful people to tell other successful people where to head in. By God, we owed it to each other. By God, this was the American way. By God, this was how our country got to be what it was today, by God! It was all very simple: out of jealousy and anxiety he had felt under compulsion to attack the greatest creative lady of the American theater today. Unquestionably there was a touch of cannibalism in it, partaking of the host: by chewing up Mary Chase, he could be stronger.

My generalization does disservice to the quiet pluggers in many fields who have not been affected by the boom complex but, on the whole, it can be defended. Our trend has been to respect the kind of mind that romanticizes an expanding community and only when it begins to backfire, as in the case of Denver University, do we begin to take sober inventory.

But it is pretty much the way we have always worked out here. The dream-world of the Kansas wheat king or the Texas oil baron is analogous to the dream-world of the bonanza boys of the pioneer mining era. Landmarks come and go and it's silly to be sentimental about them, for the kind of grandiose pride that destroys, for example, the Denver Club building is identical with the grandiose pride that created it in the first place.

. . . But, however you try to say it, the Western spirit at this

time is dominated by the pontifications of accidental success. It imposes patterns of rightness, broad premises nobody questions. If we are overloading our economy, it bothers no one. Water comes out of the faucet; if it doesn't come, it's the mayor's fault. If you're dreamy enough to be interested in annual precipitation, watersheds, or water-tables, you can look them up in the library. And incidentally these damned libraries, these schools, these jails, these hospitals, are costing us too much money. We gotta cut down on these fancy trimmings, we gotta be practical, we gotta be realistic, by God!

JULY 18, 1953

I envy men who can understand the language of the land. Every farm crop on every field is honest. It tells the truth and nothing but the truth. Good management, bad management, fertility, pests, diseases—everything you want to know—is being spoken to you as you drive down the highway. It's a language slow to learn and I never cease to be amazed by the illusions of city people who dream innocently of getting away from it all and going back to the land. Invariably, their first bucolic chore—hiring a farmer who understands farming to do the farming for them—has little pastoral romance in it.

SEPTEMBER 5, 1953

Sunday we went over Boreas Pass from Como to Breckenridge Several times as a child I'd been over Boreas in the little narrow-gauge steam cars, with Old Dad Hall running the front C. & S. engine and Conductor St. John swaying up and down the curve-creaking, stove-heated little coaches. There was something religious about it: Old Dad Hall looked exactly like God, his long white beard flowing out of the cab like timberline trees blown all one way, and saintly St. John who could give a child a reassuring glance as if to say that the thundering mountains would not crash through the windows in Platte Canyon and the train would not tumble off its tight-rope on Nigger Hill and go smashing down the precipices to Breckenridge so far below.

Then there was the train butcher—Ralph Mayo might recall

his name—a sleek, unearthly character, half good, half evil, tempting children with cornucopias of grapes, sweet chocolate, crackerjack, amber lenses, green lenses, bananas, licorice sticks, red-hots; he would dump them into your lap, you didn't have to pay for any of these treasures at the moment, but there always came the moment of reckoning; the train butcher made you pay more than the nickels and dimes you'd saved; you had to beg your parents for money; meanwhile the crackerjack and bananas were conspiring with the dizzy curves to make you very ill. Perhaps you made it to the end of the car, but more likely you didn't. From Denver to Leadville, over Kenosha Pass, then climbing Boreas Pass and Fremont Pass, those coaches had an unforgettable scent: the smoke, the cinders, the rainy varnish on the window sills, commingled with the odors of the spruces, alders, currants, roses, mints and sages—all interfused with the vomit of car-sick children.

But Old Dad Hall, the engineer who looked like God, never got sick, which was remarkable when you realize that in the 64 miles from Como to Leadville, 59 miles were curves. There were 435 curves; the total degrees of curvature were 13,266 degrees and 44 minutes, and there were 37 complete circles. Just imagine that. Naturally, as you leaned out the window, you came to know the engineer very intimately; you could see him tooting the whistle and ringing the bell to scare the mountains off the track ahead. Around each curve they would scamper away like deer or chipmunks. Otherwise, the train could never have got through at all.

But that's all gone. The line was abandoned, the rails were torn up for scrap and helped to destroy, from Pearl Harbor to the Rhine, the sons of some who had loved it.

Ordinary passenger automobiles can go over Boreas Pass now. The east side, from Como up the Tarryall, is still a bit rough and rugged with a good many high centers, some eyebrow cliffs and wet spots where you may bog down, but from the summit down to Breckenridge you follow the old railroad right-of-way, fairly well graded and easy going via Belmont, Baker's Tank, Rocky Point, Nigger Hill and Hookeye Curve. We must have seen ten cars making the trip Sunday, but I prefer the jeep; it goes slowly; it's more like sitting in a moving chair than riding in an automo-

bile and you can read the mountain slopes, just tilted at the angle of a convenient book, as Robert Frost once remarked as we were walking up Bear Creek Canyon . . . Jeeping is as close to strolling as motoring can get.

An elephant might be all right too. I thought of the elephant story as we worked up the Tarryall with magnificent views of Boreas Mountain on the right, scarfed by a new moon of snow, and Silverheels on the left—the story of the stranded circus train and how the elephants got out and pushed the train over the pass. . . .

The summit of Boreas Pass is 11,493 feet. It is bleak and windy and Sunday was warm and sunny. The old snowsheds are gone but there are a few buildings left. I recommend the trip; nothing in Colorado is more beautiful and the view you get of the Ten-Mile Range rising from the Blue River Valley over Goose Pasture—those mountains, Crystal, Pacific, Quandary, North Star—is very exciting.

The aspens were putting on such a show as I'd seldom seen—deep reds, lemon greens, ochres, coppers, terra cottas, peach tints, golden yellows. Half way down the pass we found some very fragrant blue gentians in blossom on the edge of the equinox. . . .

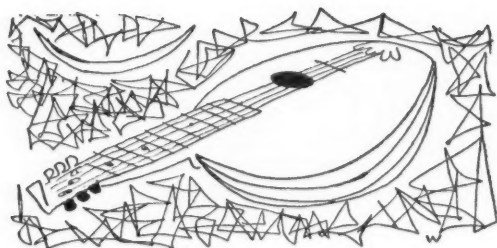
SEPTEMBER 19, 1953

What's become of the Fourth Dimension—so dear to my heart in the scenes of my childhood? Poor old Fourth Dimension; nobody ever bothers with it any more. Everything is 3-D now. But I don't want any 3-D movies, or 3-D slides, or 3-D folders, or 3-D point-of-purchase displays; I don't want to wear the latest TWEEDimensional suit from London and I don't want any 3-D toothpaste with 3-D chlorophyll in it. Thrice damned be the whole works! Good Lord, only yesterday I read of a Wall Street pundit's suggesting "three-dimensional perspective" on the sagging stock market if we were to take a sound and conservative attitude toward the foreseeable future.

The truth is, we have never improved on Sir Charles Wheatstone's stereoscope of the 1830's unless you give some credit to Oliver Wendell Holmes to whom I give thanks for sitting on the front porch as a child (Aunt Jo always called it "the front piaz-

za''), with the carriages trundling down Downing Street, and there we'd sit on Sunday afternoon, staring through the lenses at the enticing World of Otherwhere—the Great Pyramids, Niagara Falls, the incredible Flatiron Building, the Matterhorn, Brooklyn Bridge.

The double postcards were always warped and crackling coffee-brown and you quarreled with your sisters over how far up or down to slide the trombone-like gadget that held the pictures. Those were the days. But let me not be sentimental. Plainly, the 3-D vogue has its place; it gives awareness to the two-dimensional minds of our time. Thanks to 3-D, if you take time to adjust everything right, you can see a tree that looks exactly like a tree you could see without 3-D if it ever occurred to you to look at it.



Music in the poems of Thomas Hornsby Ferril

CECIL EFFINGER

Probably ever since man first got a gleam in his eye, the two forms of expression which we call music and poetry have gone together one way or another. Few are the souls who do not at some time let forth by way of "words and music."

It seems to me pretty hard to conceive of poetry that does not have at least a little music in it, since both music and poetry have so much in common. I must say I've seen some poetry in which apparently there has been a determined effort on the part of the poet to avoid anything musical. But for that matter I know some music in which this is the case, too! Usually the results in both media fail to be music or poetry at all.

But in the poems of Tom Ferril I find wonderful music. There is the music resulting from the more obvious areas of common ground between poetry and music, such as rhythmic movement. However, what interests me most, as a composer, is the music that shines through in some of the deeper and more penetrating qualities which music and poetry share. Of these, two are particularly important in Ferril's poetry, sound and form.

In his Foreword to Ferril's *New and Selected Poems*, H. L. Davis says that the poems "were written primarily to be read aloud." In the *Rocky Mountain Herald* of February 20, 1954, Ferril wrote:

These new instruments, radio and television, by one of the ironic compensations of history, are restoring to poetry ancient vocal values that suffered some damage as the result of the invention of printing. The book, while necessary if poems are to be read at all, has, alas, since the days of Gutenberg, also encouraged eye-to-type-to-mind experiences tending to shunt out the glory of the voice. Particularly, since about 1912, exciting adventures in typography for its own sake have beguiled so many would-be poets that you'd think their lips had been taped and their ears plugged.

Bizarre typography itself is not the test, for some very good poets

prefer it for reasons that can be defended. (Your mind, they will tell you, does not think its thoughts beginning with capital letters and cluttered up with punctuation, so why should a poem's flow be cluttered up with them?) But if typography is not the test, reading aloud is. A poem which cannot be read well aloud and which depends on verbal design on the page, is veering off toward the graphic arts if they want to claim it. The radio makes these separations decisively; it restores the full components of primitive poetry and rejects any manipulative affectations that are not poetry at all.

. . . Once we jump the hurdle from the silent page to the vocal page, poetry finds its own competitive way. . . . One thing is so true that it's commonplace. The silent reader, on hearing a poem read competently aloud, invariably expresses surprise. He had no idea the poem had so much in it.

Ferril has a strong sensitivity to the sound of words in themselves and in relation to their meanings. In music this kind of sensitivity is necessary in order to choose the right tone color for good orchestration. For instance, the opening of Weber's overture to *Oberon* consists of three rising scalewise notes played by the French horn. This is simple but perfect expression with lasting impact, and the French horn tone is the most important part of the passage; no other tone color would do as well.

The problem of finding the right sound in music is easier than choosing the right word in poetry because in music specific meanings don't come into the picture. An Italian trombone player I once knew thought that "cellar door" was the most beautiful sound in English he knew, but as a kid I found it difficult to reconcile his feeling about the sound of those words and the complete lack of beauty of our cellar door. With Ferril it seems that if there is a choice of words he will use the one with the most accurate meaning rather than the best sound. Yet how often he manages to find the right word, the word in which the abstract sound and color is right for the feeling of the passage, and which has the accurate meaning as well.

Not wing, not womb, not charity half-anthem,
Not the ninety-ninth lamb nor yet the hundredth lamb,
Nor even blue woods wincing from the ice cap
Nor any island listing toward a hymn, . . .

This passage from "Grandmother's Old Dear Friend" might seem to a composer to be woodwinds, or strings, or brass, or a combination. Whatever it is in music, it is poetic orchestration of high order.

To me the element of *form* embraces both poetry and music and it affects each more similarly and completely than any other quality. In this conception of form I include the overall shape of a work or poem, as well as the more detailed and subtle aspects of internal form, such as the interplay of parts within the whole, and, of course, meter. The handling of form in poetry or in music indicates with equal certainty the greatness of the poet or the composer.

One method of achieving form which Ferril uses a great deal is what we refer to in music as organic development. This is the same kind of development which we see in the growth of a flower or tree from a seed. In music it may be the transformation of a musical fragment into new ones during the course of a piece or into the formation of a complete melody. It is a formal device of great power. Notice for example, how in these six measures the simple theme or idea stated in the first four notes expands and becomes more complex as the melody progresses.



In poetry there can be similar development from one word to another, meaning and sound culminating in a total effect. Ferril's use of this kind of development is deft, and always it is a means to a more intense and expressive end.

The carbonates are clanging like a bell!
The mountains ring, the mountains swing!
The clappers of the mountains crack!
The silver cracks
And the single jacks
And the hammers bang,
And the hair grows long

And the ear is thatched
To hold a match as dry as bone
To light a fuse to crack the stone!

"Words for Leadville"

It goes without saying that to use any formal device for its own sake is to have no art at all. The device must serve a purpose, as in the third movement of the Brahms' *First Symphony*, which opens with a ten measure melody for clarinet, in which the up-and-down movement of notes in the first five measure phrase is literally turned upside down to create the last five measures of the melody.



Many people quite familiar with the music do not see this device. Nor is it important to do so, for the melody is *expressive*. Yet similar devices can be found all through Brahms, never obtrusive, but always serving the expression. So it is with the best composers—and poets.

Practically none of Ferril's poetry has been set to music. It is not probable that much of it will be except in a most dedicated way, since he is much more than just a lyricist and since his poems are complete enough with the full complement of those things which music can generally only duplicate. In 1952, however, I had the opportunity to compose a symphonic-choral work based on "Words for Time," a poem which embodies many of the important musical qualities to be found in Ferril's poetry.

"Words for Time" presents one of the dominant themes familiar to readers of Ferril's poems—the continuity of the human spirit, a spirit that outwears not only the erosions of the material world, but also survives its own cruelties and betrayals. The poem develops moods around man's various concepts of time, from his simplest child-like ideas up to some of the portentous implications of the atomic age. It ends with the poet's emphasis on love as a dimension of time itself.

In overall form "Words for Time" is a symphony in three movements. The first has broad lines and a climax beautifully placed. The second movement is a natural scherzo and trio, with the right words all ready to put into use at precisely the time the music needs them. The ironic climax of the poem occurs in the end of this movement. Then comes the third movement, more reflective, serious, with its high point having a deep emotional nature. The finish is quiet, endless, reaching on into space as far as one can imagine, and farther.

Encountering form such as in this poem one realizes again the applicability of the fundamental laws of form to all the arts. In composing the symphony I had few problems in this respect, for Ferril had created a perfect form, which imposed its characteristics on the music. The poet's timing illustrates one feature of the organic form of his poem. For example, the tempo of these lines

Ask dew on the ox-bow:
Where did the century go?
Ask lantern light on the butternut sleeve
In the evening.

should be unhurried, whether read or sung. The lines

Shall I speak allegory: Time has teeth,
Forgives, is foolish, yawns, rubs like a river,
Is bald, is nick, is nurse, is pale avenger?

foretell of a gathering crescendo and a resounding climax.

The closeness of this relationship between the natural form of the poem and the musical expression of it is dramatically illustrated by an incident which occurred while preparing the symphony for performance. In my typed working copy of the poem the word "so" had been omitted from these lines:

And when to go
And go
And go so soon . . .

I had a terrible time with this spot, and then in rehearsal the chorus had difficulty in singing the passage. Finally during a dress rehearsal the missing "so" was discovered. The trouble of chang-

ing one hundred choral parts and all the parts for the orchestra, a considerable chore, was justified by the fact that the whole problem was smoothed out for the entire passage by the inclusion of the missing word and the notes to go with it. Thus I learned that Ferril means every word he writes.

Throughout the poem the lines determined the meter of the music. Fast triple meter obviously goes with

Over and under the poles of the earth
And toss the earth like a toy balloon.

or with

Hickory-dickory Geiger Time?
The mouse ran up the isotope, . . .

For these lines in the scherzo I used the first six notes of the nursery tune to "Hickory-dickory dock," which incidentally has the same fast triple-time effect of the scherzo in a Beethoven symphony.



A scherzo is a joke, and the middle part of the poem *is* a scherzo, a terrifying joke of our time!

Where you are you shall burn up
In your hiding place or not!

Ferril's sense of form in "Words for Time" solved more difficult problems than meter, however. Where movement in time is involved in the arts, it is often necessary to repeat ideas in order to weld long spans of structure together. The classic method of achieving this necessary unity of the whole was simply to repeat entire passages. Contemporary music, on the other hand, seldom repeats a passage literally. Instead, it offers the unifying material

in a different way, a development of itself. Ferril uses a comparable technique in his poetry and prose to achieve overall structural cohesiveness. Sometimes the reference to material is almost literal. The line

Nearer, a snow-white-pitch-black magpie bird . . .

is followed much later in the poem by these related lines:

Where nothing can go faster than the light
That let me love that magpie's wing tonight: . . .

At other times the reference shows wide transformation in a short space. The passage

How many turns of calico tied to a spoke
Of a wheel
Make a mile
Make a century?

is followed almost immediately by

Tonight I was watching a jet-plane lag behind
The spokes of light a hub of sunken sun
Was turning in the under-West
Behind the Rocky Mountains.

Thus, where the two arts were on common ground, Ferril's poem solved most of my problems of form. To realize the poem in music as well as he had in words was, of course, the real challenge.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for me to identify exactly the kind of music I find in Ferril's poetry. To say that it is like any other poet's music or any particular composer's music is rather useless. Furthermore, to find what is distinctively his is beyond my present purpose. The higher up the ladder of expressive power a poet climbs, the more he is like himself and that's the crucial thing. A great poet can make "floor" and "door" rhyme no prettier than a poor poet. Alliteration, plain and subtle rhythm, simile and metaphor, the melodious phrase, the euphonious word, the group-

ings of *l*'s and *m*'s or what-not—these are the tools of all poets. The student of harmony has the same chords to work with that Beethoven had. It is, of course, what the artist expresses that is important. For me, the music in Ferril's poetry expresses a fine balance of the best qualities in the music of the past and of our time, and for me, that is enough.

CUADRADOS Y ANGULOS

By ALFONSINA STORNI

Translated by BERNICE UDICK

*Casas enfiladas, casas enfiladas,
Casas enfiladas.
Cuadrados, cuadrados, cuadrados,
Casas enfiladas.
Las gentes ya tienen el alma cuadrada,
Ideas en fila
Y ángulo en la espalda.
Yo misma he vertido ayer una lágrima,
Dios mío, cuadrada.*

Houses, houses, houses.
Rows of houses. Rows. Rows of houses.
Square, square, square.
Rows of houses.
Square minds,
Ideas all right-angled,
Square shoulders all in line.
Yesterday I shed a tear—
Dear God, the tear was square!

Senator or prophet?

RUFUS PUTNEY

How to protect our liberties without the loss of our freedom is the puzzling dilemma that confronts sober-minded citizens of the United States today. If we generally lose faith in one another, if we view with angry suspicion—as sundry senators urge—all whose opinions differ from our own, if we allow newspaper, radio, and political demagogues to force upon us a regimentation of thought and expression alien to the traditions of our country, then we shall have lost the priceless heritage the Constitution bestows. Then we shall have turned our backs on the noble, liberating ideals for which so many Americans have sought to live and dared to die. Yet it is just as clear, on the other hand, that we may lose our freedom in an even more hideous fashion if we fail to defend our democracy against those who conspire to substitute a ruthless totalitarianism for the essential political freedom without which there can be no liberty of any kind. The menace to our liberties comes from many quarters, but the fate of various countries suggests that communism especially must be intelligently combated, first, because its fanatical minorities enjoy a pseudo-religious sanction for brutality, and, second, because Communist strength breeds native fascism.

Thus the fundamental but bewildering question for those unwilling to be dupes of Congressional investigators is whom we can trust, whom we must distrust. We must find the answer. All loyal citizens agree that traitors should be punished. But if we mistake sheep for goats, we do both the sheep and ourselves irreparable damage. If we entrust the defense of freedom to hireling shepherds, not only will they continue to destroy the sheep, but they will also put the rest of us in danger by restricting our right to speak what we believe. That we must prevent at all risks. Ferreting out treason is a desirable goal, but it cannot justify slander, illegality, and injustice. For the end can never justify the means. To use the wrong means, to persecute the

innocent with the guilty, is to alter entirely the end we set out to attain. We shall then find ourselves no longer suppressing conspiracy but crushing liberty instead. Our plight is not yet so desperate as to prevent our agreeing with Judge Learned Hand's wise counsel:

Risk for risk, for myself I had rather take the chance that some traitors will escape detection than spread abroad a spirit of general suspicion and distrust, which accept rumor and gossip in place of undismayed and unintimidated inquiry. I believe that that community is already in the process of dissolution where each man begins to eye his neighbor as a possible enemy, where non-conformity with the accepted creed, political as well as religious, is a mark of disaffection; where denunciation, without specification or backing, takes the place of evidence; where faith in the eventual supremacy of reason has become so timid that we dare not enter our convictions in the open lists, to win or lose. Such fears as these are a solvent which can eat out the cement that binds the stones together; they may in the end subject us to a despotism as evil as any we dread; and they can be allayed only in so far as we refuse to proceed on suspicion, and trust one another until we have tangible ground for misgiving.¹

Judge Hand deserves to be heard and heeded. But if men's ears are deaf to his and similar voices, then where can we turn for guidance?

At a time when the precepts of religion and morality are so much in the mouths of our leading statesmen, it should not appear unnatural for us to look to the Bible for answers. And there is nowhere we or our leaders could turn with better results. On this darkest and gravest of problems, the Hebrew prophets in particular shed a clear and steady light. Today the names of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the rest are well-known and highly respected. Yet, if admiration for them is founded on firmer ground than the fact that their names are enshrined in the Bible and the notion that, having long been dead, they must consequently be harmless and inoffensive, we must be aware that if any one of them was a countryman of ours today, he would as surely as Christ be under the surveillance of one or another Congressional investigating committee. We should realize that in admiring the prophets we are admiring political, social, and

religious revolutionaries, who seemed offensive and dangerously subversive in the eyes of their most respectable contemporaries. And in the case of Jeremiah we are admiring a Trojan Horse, a collaborator, possibly even a traitor. Surely, it is far better to think soberly through the problems created by the Jeremiahs of our day than to seek our salvation from platitudes about morality in government. For the words of Isaiah are as disturbingly true in our world as they were in Judah almost twenty-seven hundred years ago:

Woe to those who call evil good
and good evil,
who put darkness for light
and light for darkness,
who put bitter for sweet
and sweet for bitter!
Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,
and shrewd in their own sight!²

Actually, no matter how lofty their conception of God and religious truth, the prophets, from the standpoint of a conservative today, were scurvy fellows. Not one of them had a decent respect for the sanctity of property or the inviolability of profits. All of them were victims of the notion that human rights transcend property rights. All thought it better to be good than great, virtuous than powerful. Holding such beliefs, they were certain to give offense in their role of spokesmen for God. That is particularly true since God in their eyes was far less concerned with the sins of the individual than he was with the ethical standards of the nation or of significant groups within it. They addressed their denunciations, therefore, either to the people as a whole, or to kings, princes, nobles, great landowners, rich merchants, priests, and the like. Censure of such homogeneous and conservative groups arouses today the same fierce hostility the prophets encountered.

Our native critics address us gently compared to the harshness with which the Hebrew Prophets spoke. Amos, the earliest whose writings we possess, used such soft and silken terms as these in attacking the wealthy businessmen of his day:

Hear this, you who trample upon the needy,
and bring the poor of the land to an end,
saying, "When will the new moon be over,
that we may sell grain?
And the sabbath,
that we may offer wheat for sale,
that we may make the ephah small and the shekel great,
and deal deceitfully with false balances,
that we may buy the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
and sell the refuse of the wheat?"

Amos' contemptuous hatred of such greed and of the desire to force the poor into economic servitude is impressive, but Micah achieved an even greater bitterness through his charge of cannibalism as a figurative way of describing the oppression of the poor by the rich and powerful:

Hear, you head of Jacob
and rulers of the house of Israel!
Is it not for you to know justice?—
you who hate the good and love the evil
who tear the skin from off my people,
and their flesh from off their bones;
who eat the flesh of my people,
and flay their skin from off them,
and break their bones in pieces,
and chop them up like meat in a kettle,
like flesh in a caldron.

Small wonder if such vehement critics of the social order were slandered, persecuted, imprisoned, and sometimes martyred.

What is remarkable in the light of such passages is the fact that our leaders today urge a return to the Judaeo-Christian traditions while they consent, like Saul of Tarsus, to the indiscriminate stoning of true and false prophets. Bishop Oxnam and the Protestant clergy are as welcome as a real Communist to those eager for targets. For let no one be deceived; those who cast the stones are as fearful of any critical opinion as they are of Communist ideology. As Doris Fleeson wrote in the Winter issue of *The Colorado Quarterly*: "What a convenient label communism is. If one is for public housing, one is a Communist. If one is for

more and better schools and higher pay for teachers, one is a Communist. If one is for full citizenship privileges for all Americans, one is a Communist." Does any one doubt that this convenient label would be stamped on the Prophets if they again appeared and made their attacks on the perpetrators of economic and social injustice?

It was not merely their attacks, however, that made the Prophets uncomfortable fellows to have around. Even more irritating than their denunciations of evil were the dire consequences they foresaw if the leaders of the nation refused to change their ways. The Prophets' conception of God was so lofty and so noble, their analyses of the current international situation so acute, that they could scarcely fail to outrage and depress their countrymen. God, they maintained, is One, the creator of the world, the God of all nations. He is universal, holy, righteous, unrepresentable, merciful but just, stern but loving. He demands the unswerving fidelity of men, but He requires no elaborate formal worship. Indeed, He is offended by a ritual that is a substitute for righteousness. His supreme demand is the strictest loyalty to Him. Next, He insists that man be humane to man, that all human relationships be conducted with justice, mercy, and love. The sixth chapter of Micah contains a most beautiful summary of this fundamental message of all the Prophets:

"With what shall I come before the Lord
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my first-born for my transgression
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"
He has showed you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Had the Prophets always spoken so, perhaps they would have offended only the priests, who had a pecuniary interest in sacrifices. Then they might have fared no worse than Jeremiah, when

Pashur the priest ordered him beaten and put in the stocks for denouncing the practice of child sacrifice.

But because the Prophets saw with such indignation the iniquities of the people, and because they apprehended so keenly the righteousness of God, they were convinced that He would bring punishment upon the nation. All Israelites must have known the menace of their enemies: first the great Assyrian power, then the Scythian hordes that swept through the Near East, and, finally, the Babylonian Empire. The old and reassuring doctrine of the Israelites was the belief that the God of the Hebrews would fight on their side. But the Prophets produced the alarming heresy that their God would use His universal power to make the Assyrians or Scythians or Babylonians the instruments by which He would purge and punish His people. Over and over again, from Amos to Ezekiel, they proclaimed the woe to come:

Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees,
and the writers who keep writing oppression,
to turn aside the needy from justice
and to rob the poor of my people of their right,
that their widows may be their spoil,
and that they may make the fatherless their prey!
What will you do on the day of punishment,
in the storm that will come from afar?
To whom will you flee for help,
and where will you leave your wealth?
Nothing remains but to crouch among the prisoners
or fall among the slain.
For all this his anger is not turned away
and his hand is stretched out still!

Other passages, in Amos and Jeremiah especially, predict more catastrophic punishments, but few are more ominous than these quiet, derisive, threatening words of Isaiah.

Besides vexing their hearers with constant forebodings for the future, some of the Prophets made themselves further obnoxious by daring to criticize the foreign policy of the nation. Thus Isaiah again and again decried the alliance with Egypt, by which Hezekiah sought to strengthen himself against the Assyrian power. Likewise he censured his king for allying himself to the Babylonian rebel, Merodach-baladan. But it was Jeremiah who

gave the greatest offense on this score. At least twice during his career, Babylonian armies besieged Jerusalem. On each occasion Jeremiah counseled a policy of peaceful appeasement before the attack began. Again and again, while the armies lay outside the city, he urged surrender. Once when they were withdrawn to meet an Egyptian threat, Jeremiah sought to desert the city and go to his home in Benjamin. He was stopped by the guard and delivered to the princes. Enraged they threw him into prison. Later in the siege Jeremiah confronted even greater danger. Chapter 38 tells how various great men heard him speaking to the people:

"Thus says the Lord, He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he who goes out to the Chaldeans shall live; he shall have his life as a prize of war, and live. Thus says the Lord, This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon and be taken." Then the princes said to the king, "Let this man be put to death, for he is weakening the hands of the soldiers who are left in this city, and the hand of all the people, by speaking such words to them. For this man is not seeking the welfare of the people, but their harm." King Zedekiah said, "Behold, he is in your hands; for the king can do nothing against you." So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son, which was in the court of guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. And there was no water in the cistern, but only mire, and Jeremiah sank in the mire.

There they left him to die of thirst or starvation, executed without trial or any process of law. He was saved only because one of the king's servants prevailed upon Zedekiah to rescue him.

Manifestly, the princes thought Jeremiah a traitor. Traitors are an unsavory lot, even those who desert the enemy to serve one's own side. But was Jeremiah a traitor? No one alive then, himself included, would have called him a one-hundred-per-cent Hebrew. That distinction was reserved for the "false prophets" like Hannaniah, who filled his hearers with the comfortable assurance that Nebuchadnezzar would fail and Judah be restored. A man like Hannaniah brings to mind Dr. Johnson's definition of patriotism, the outgrowth of his disillusionment with the super-patriots of eighteenth century England. In 1775 he remarked in the course of a conversation, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a

scoundrel." Not even Senator McCarthy, probably, would call Jeremiah a traitor or a scoundrel. Yet any man who today spoke as he did would surely be accused of treason and would be widely regarded as guilty in a society that can tolerate and reward the persons who impute disloyalty to General Marshall.

Jeremiah, like most of the victims of McCarthy's, Jenner's, McCarran's, and Velde's attacks, can be defended. Judah, in the sixth and seventh centuries B.C. was, after all, less like the United States now than like Belgium in World War II, and Jeremiah's position was similar to that of King Leopold. What the Prophet consistently urged was that the Hebrews make themselves pure, that they worship God in truth and righteousness. Speaking for God he said:

If ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt; Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

He did not commit the crass error so common nowadays of supposing there is some perfect foreign policy that will solve all current problems without creating baffling new ones. Probably, he did not regard Babylonian domination as a good. Surely he saw it as inevitable and realized that if the Judeans purged themselves, if they sought to live well and quietly, they would be spared greater evils. Is it not inconsistent to regard Jeremiah as a hero and King Leopold as virtually a traitor to his country?

To whom, then, should we look for guidance, to our Congressional investigators or to the Hebrew Prophets? To men wise in their own eyes, or to the vigorous but humble advocates of a great ideal? To the shrewd and ambitious manipulators of popular prejudice and hatred, or to men of profound insight and independent thought? If we truly believe in democracy, we can only answer that we will accept the leadership of the Prophets. And I would further assert that if we look thoughtfully enough at Jeremiah and the others, we can learn how to distinguish our friends from our enemies. For the real test is not the orthodoxy of what is said, but the spirit that motivates the critic. A year

or so ago a reporter asked Bertrand Russell whether he thought Marxism offered any hope for the future. Earl Russell replied that he did not. Karl Marx, he said, pretended he wanted to make the proletariat happy. Actually, he wanted to make the bourgeoisie unhappy. Because of this negative element his philosophy produced disaster. For nothing sound can be built on hate; love is the only solid foundation.

Love of country, love of the people inspired even the harshest utterances of the Prophets. They exhorted their hearers to revitalize the nation by remoulding it according to the great traditions of justice, mercy, and holiness of the Hebrew past. Intense conviction, rather than the superficial and honorific piety we hear, inspired their invocations of God and morality. It is not from political leaders then or now that one can expect an impassioned exhortation like Amos' plea,

But let justice run down as waters,
And righteousness as a mighty stream.

It is not from Presidents, Premiers or Senators that we can hear corrosive but remedial words like Jeremiah's prediction that the iniquities of the rich will yield an epidemic of disaster:

For wicked men are found among my people;
they lurk like fowls lying in wait.
They set a trap;
they catch men.
Like a basket full of birds,
their houses are full of treachery;
therefore they have become great and rich,
they have grown fat and sleek.
They know no bounds in wickedness;
they judge not with justice
the cause of the fatherless, to make it prosper,
and they do not defend the rights of the needy.
Shall I not punish them for these things?
says the Lord.

Time has vindicated the Hebrew prophets in their criticism of the religious, social, political, and economic evils of their day, as time will vindicate all who speak and act because they love their

fellowmen and because they love justice, mercy, and freedom. We need prophets and critics to stir and guide us. We have a right to demand of them that they love us while they hate our vices, that they be loyal to us and sincerely strive for our welfare, that they be willing to praise what is healthy and good while they censure the ill, and that they base their criticism, as the Hebrew Prophets did, on a transcendent ideal that has no evil in it. So long as they follow this course, we should not persecute but welcome and cherish them however unpalatable their words. For we too need to be reminded that we can ill afford to be at ease in Zion, even in the Zion of Democracy, that we cannot afford any more than the Hebrews of old our profitable injustices, pleasant lassitudes, and enjoyable vices. We need to be exhorted to purge, purify, and refine ourselves, to cease living by slogans, to forego the comfort of shopworn platitudes, and to dedicate ourselves to creating a democracy that is vital, generous, and just. Only then can we hope to achieve the leadership under which the world may realize the splendid vision of Isaiah, when many peoples shall come and say:

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths.”
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between the nations,
and shall decide for many peoples;
and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning-hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

FOOTNOTES

¹*The Spirit of Liberty: Papers and Addresses of Learned Hand* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 284.

²This and all other quotations from the Bible are taken from *The Revised Standard Version* (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1952).

Three poems

AUGUST KADOW

STEREOSCOPE

The effect was terror stilled, as if a box
held levels of crushed trees, withered to wax
the cold museum of an alpine scene.

Grandmother then gave this to quiet me,
so I would watch the flyspeck hover free,
black plane of branch, the boy who always leaned

above a stream where water did not wake.
I wished his step, a pebble to react,
fall toward eventual echo and thaw sound.

So when she died, I saw Grandmother's face
as such a plane above a velvet place
and stood there long awaiting German nouns.

THE USE OF BIRDS

How red blue green is the pure macaw.
Place him on a branch, he serves
to light the neighborhood. But raw
and bright at night he will sever the nerves.

Long as a lever the toucan's bill
will open letters, plaster the wall,
and crack pecans. Yet your ear will fill
with his fear until all unbalanced you fall.

Pink as a shrimp the flamingo brings
warm sunsets to the kitchen sink.
But his unanswered neck soon flings
noon's philosophies to the black night's brink.

THE STONE GAME

A girl at solitary hopscotch stands,
legs spread to span the concrete silences,
moves like a compass or a wishing bone.

Intent on the next crack, the line, the not-
to-be-missed link in the imagined pattern,
she deftly bridges these imperfect bands
and gains at least two squares.

Her legs are thin
for seeking after strenuous purposes,
yet to her triumphs they have added four,
and, finding a worthy line on which to fasten,
they are now eager for a distant spot.

Is it because she makes a game of stone,
bent on resolving the shapes of trivial things,
she reaches the climax of the corner store?

A work of art

WILLIAM E. WILSON

Tom and Emily Carson were delighted when their twelve-year-old son, Mike, began working on a "surprise" for the twins. All that fall, his Tuesday and Friday classes in Carpentry had been giving him nightmares, for he had no natural skill with his hands, but after he started work on the "surprise" he began to look forward to Tuesdays and Fridays almost as eagerly as he looked forward to Saturdays and holidays. The nightmares stopped and, at the same time, his grades in all his studies began to improve.

Mike would not tell anyone what the "surprise" was.

"You wait and see," he said to the five-year-old twins when they asked him. "You'll like it, I think."

He brought the "surprise" home from school in February. It was a wooden duck that waddled and nodded its head when it was pulled along the floor by a string. It was crudely made and even more crudely painted, but it worked and it immediately became the twins' favorite toy.

For several days, Emily Carson was secretly entertained by the casual way in which Mike managed to be on hand whenever the twins played with the duck. If they used it roughly, he flinched, and whenever the string became tangled and the duck would not work, his hands made involuntary gestures toward assistance; but he never gave advice or forgot the dignity of his twelve years to the point of getting down on the floor and joining the twins in their games with the duck, and whenever Emily spoke of the pleasure his gift was affording the twins, he squirmed and said the duck wasn't really anything at all and she ought to see what some of the other fellows in Carpentry had made.

"I'll be lucky if I pass, I guess," he said.

Eventually the duck went the way of all the twins' toys; it was discarded. Tom and Emily forgot about it, until one evening in June just before the Commencement exercises at Mike's school. Then Mike brought the duck to mind again.

"They're having a handicraft show at school next week," he announced. "They're going to give prizes for the best things. Do you think my duck would be all right for me to enter—if the twins will lend it to me?"

"Why, of course, Mike!" Emily said; and Tom agreed: "It's just the thing!"

Mike had never won anything in his life except a certificate that had been awarded the year before to everyone in his class who sold twenty-five dollars worth of magazine subscriptions for the Class Fund. It was unlikely that the duck would win a prize, but he would certainly never have another opportunity to exhibit in a handicraft show. As soon as he had brought the duck home, in February, his enthusiasm for Carpentry collapsed. Tuesdays and Fridays had again been causing him nightmares all spring.

But when the twins were told to fetch the duck, they said they did not know where it was.

"Maybe it died," one of the twins suggested, after Emily and Mike had hunted everywhere for the duck.

At that point, Emily began to suspect that she was confronted with something more than a search for a lost toy.

"I'll look again tomorrow, Mike," she said, "I'll find it."

But she was not so sure as she made herself sound.

The next day, after Mike had gone to school, Emily began her inquisition.

"Just try to think," she said. "Just stop and try to think where you last saw the duck."

At first, the twins only looked blank and shook their heads solemnly; but finally, just as she was about to give up, they burst into simultaneous howls of grief and fear. They ran out of the house then and returned in a few minutes with something wrapped in newspaper and covered with dried mud.

"We didn't break it!" they protested between sobs. "It was our most favorite thing. We tried to feed it but it died. So we buried it. But we didn't break it. Honest, we didn't. It just died."

They had tried to feed the duck by pouring glue into its insides; and when it would no longer waddle and nod its head, they had wrapped it in newspaper and buried it in the back yard. The spring rains had done the rest.

Emily Carson spent an unhappy afternoon waiting for Mike to come home from school; and as she expected, the moment he swung into the driveway on his bicycle he called out to her, "Hi, Mom, did you find the duck?"

She did not know how to tell him, so she held the hopeless mess out to him as he came in the door.

"They didn't mean to ruin it, Mike," she said. "They tried to feed it glue and when it wouldn't work, they buried it. They loved it, Mike. You know that. It was their favorite toy."

Mike stood in the doorway a long time examining the ruined duck, and Emily, watching his mouth quiver, thought she could not bear it if he cried. But he did not cry. He sucked his lower lip between his teeth and carried the duck upstairs to his room. He did not come down until his father returned from work at dinnertime.

Mike never mentioned the duck again. When the prizes were awarded at the handicraft exhibit, he showed no evidence of envy or regret. He applauded the winners loudly—perhaps a little too loudly, Emily thought, although she could not be sure—and shook their hands and admired their exhibits generously. Afterwards, in the father-and-son ballgame, he hit a home run, and on the way home, in the back seat of the car, he sang songs with the twins.

But that night, long after he had gone to bed, he called downstairs to Emily.

"Yes, Mike. What is it?"

"Do you remember that certificate I won at school last year?"

"Yes, dear."

"Do you still have it?"

"Yes, dear. I keep all your records from school."

"Where is it?"

"It's in my desk," Emily said. "Do you want it for something?"

Mike was silent for several seconds. Standing at the foot of the stairs, Emily heard him turn over in his bed.

"No, thanks," Mike said. "No. I was just wondering if you still had it."

Bold slogan

MARY BYNON MATHESON

Nunn, hub of the dry land wheat domain
On Highway 85, seventy miles north of Denver,
Thirty miles south of Cheyenne:
Nunn, I shall do as your bold slogan bids,
Big lettered, high on the tall gaunt face of your elevator
Where your garnered wheat is stored:
I shall "WATCH NUNN GROW."
I shall watch Nunn grow wheat.
You, who live within the circling domain of Nunn,
The domain of the dry land wheat,
I shall watch you grow and harvest your dry land wheat,
The wheat you planted after the late summer rains
Mellowed the land.
I shall watch with you
The winds blow out the newly planted seed
And watch the replanting only to see the winds
Come again with their sand shears and cut down the new growth
And, if the season is not too late,
Watch you go out and plant again.
I shall rejoice with you as the seedlings
Stool out and form a thick green mat,
And I shall watch with you the coming of fall and winter snows
To cover your fields and shield them against the cold.
Then, when spring comes and the melting snow
Seeps through the soil,
I shall watch with you, the dormant growth stir with new life
And with you watch it grow waist high, green and strong.
Watch the ripening grain head out and change from green to gold.
I shall share your fears, your anxious moments,
Lest the rains forget to come and your fields wither
Or the too generous clouds
Spill their waters and bring rust and blight.

I shall watch your dusting planes
Spread their protection against the Mormon plague.
I shall feel with you the awful emptiness if,
When the combine rolls in to reap the harvest,
Riding a chill wind, nauseous pea-soup clouds
Roar in and disgorge their frozen pellets
Cutting a swath across the land, leaving desolation.
Yet, with all these odds against you,
I shall watch you go out each year
To till your land and sow your seed and watch it grow.
Watch you harvest your wheat and store it to overflowing
In your tall gaunt elevator
Where high on its face, big lettered,
You boldly bid all who pass your way
On Highway 85, seventy miles north of Denver,
Thirty miles south of Cheyenne, in northern Colorado:
"WATCH NUNN GROW"
"WATCH NUNN GROW" DRY LAND WINTER WHEAT.

"The Grapes of Wrath": a "wagons west" romance

BERNARD BOWRON

According to the blurb of its present Bantam edition, *The Grapes of Wrath* topped the best-seller list for two full years. It is still going strong, as anyone knows who has observed its perennial appeal to college students of American literature. And with these, as probably with its original audience, the strength of the novel's popularity seems to be almost independent of its dated message of social revolt. Even conservative and genteel readers, though they dislike Steinbeck's naive radicalism and gag over some of his calculated crudities, are taken by his novel in spite of themselves. Why should that be?

To begin with, the novel's special appeal can have little to do with its "proletarian" features. It is not even a "strike novel," in the classic sense. Though that kind of conflict plays an important part in the final section, the book as a whole is organized around a profoundly different action. Social revolt is not really Steinbeck's major concern. He has another, more universal gospel which it is designed to serve. No orthodox proletarian novelist ever generated more fury over the plight of the dispossessed, nor more sentimentality about the rise of a collective consciousness (Steinbeck's beloved "Group-Man") out of individual defeats and humiliations. We even note the regulation prophecy of an apocalyptic "final conflict" out of which, somehow, will emerge the good society. But if this novel really embodies the Party Line, then our Congressional investigators may themselves end as converts to the cause. All of Steinbeck's social message is summed up for us in Ma Joad's profound observation that "We're the People . . . We go on!" (She had evidently been reading Carl Sandburg.) Now, what are the "people"? Why do they "go on"?

In *The Grapes of Wrath* this question is answered by a famous turtle who crosses the road in chapter three and then proceeds to carry the symbolism of that inter-chapter straight into the story

of the Joads' pilgrimage from Oklahoma to the western promised land. The turtle—like the Joads—is on a pilgrimage, directed by some sure, irrational instinct, to some unknown destination. He crawls along laboriously but, in Steinbeck's words, "turns aside for nothing"—neither embankment nor highway. Preacher Casey spells it out carefully for us a little later: "Nobody can't keep a turtle . . . They work at it and work at it, and at last one day . . . away they go—off somewhere." If the Preacher had watched more closely, however, he'd have noticed that turtles don't just go vaguely "somewhere." By no means. They go "southwestward," a compass-point which Steinbeck mentions three times in one brief paragraph, in case we somehow might fail to note that turtles, like Joads, travel on Route 66.

The turtle is also indestructible. A truck hits him, and he just flips over, turns right-side up, and goes on his instinctive way. Moreover, in *his* pilgrimage the turtle is the agent of still another pilgrimage. Some wild oat seeds get stuck between his legs and shell. He carries them across the barren highway. They fall to earth on the other side, and the turtle obligingly plants them: "As the turtle crawled on down the embankment, its shell dragged dirt over the seeds." This turtle is of course the Life Force itself: tireless, indestructible, dispersing everywhere the seeds of life. But by a series of contrived associations, Steinbeck makes clear that the turtle is also the Joads—or that they are it—or in any case that "we're the *people* . . . We go on." This is hardly an original interpretation, but it has seemed to me worth restating here, simply to underline the assertion that *The Grapes of Wrath* is basically not a "proletarian" novel, in spite of Preacher Casey's strike activities and martyrdom, and Tom Joad's conversion to a kind of mystical communism. Steinbeck has the Life Force, not Marxism, on his mind.

But we must get back to the original question: what made *The Grapes of Wrath* so popular? For that question is surely not answered by the fact that its "proletarianism" is a vehicle for Steinbeck's primitivist raptures over the durability of the species, Man. This is a comforting idea, I suppose, but hardly a source of best-seller narrative excitement.

Let me approach my answer indirectly, since that was the way

it came to me. Many readers must have noted that conflict and struggle—while important as a suspense device in this novel—are not by any means its most attractive feature. Nothing in the book, with the exception of a blessed interlude in a federal migrant workers' camp in California, is half so appealing as the cross-country trip itself. Bracketed dramatically by Grandpa's death at the outset, and Grandma's on arrival in the Golden State, this trip is described in a way that is bound to appeal to any grown man who ever wanted to lay his burdens down and just go *camping*. Consider chapter seventeen, especially. Here while Steinbeck sets out to define the pilgrimage of the Joads and all the Okies as a cellular embryonic development of the organic society of the species, he actually presents, instead, an idyll of the simple, thoughtless, irresponsible life of people released temporarily from their daily concerns. The loving care that Steinbeck exerts on this section of his novel, and his reluctance to leave it and carry the Joads on into the conflicts that lie ahead, remind one strongly of certain other novels familiar to all American readers. These novels are not about Okies—though often they deal with the Okies of a former day, those stalwart, ungenteel and indestructible Missouri men known as "Pikes," who cross the plains and mountains in every "Wagons West" romance. Indeed, it was Guthrie's recent best-seller, *The Way West*, which opened my eyes to the real literary form of Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* and to the reason for its endless appeal. Then I glanced backward some thirty years to Emerson Hough's *Covered Wagon*. That did it. *The Grapes of Wrath* is in the same genre. It derives from the "Westward" novel both the structure and the values that give it its emotional horsepower. Why shouldn't this novel be popular? It always has been—whether written by Steinbeck or by Stewart Edward White.

Well, this isn't much of a discovery, nor do I put in any claim to the originality of a thing so self-evident. One must assume that Steinbeck himself was perfectly aware that his Joads—and his turtles—were re-enacting the great American legend. He is an author much given to seeing his contemporary materials in the symbolic light of such re-enactments, and the mid-nineteenth century trek to the Pacific takes on for him in another novel, *The Long Valley*, a very mythic quality indeed. In this book, pub-

lished just a year before *The Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck has an aging pioneer speak of the great journey in a way that brings vividly to mind the Joads, and the meaning of their passage across the continent. "It wasn't Indians that were important," says the old man, "nor adventures, nor even getting out there When we saw the mountains at last, we cried—all of us. But it wasn't getting here that mattered, it was movement and westering. We carried life out here and set it down the way those ants carry eggs The westering was as big as God."

Steinbeck's debt to the "Wagons West" genre may be obvious, but the extent of his debt has never been sufficiently appreciated. Yet it is striking, once one sets about examining *The Grapes of Wrath* with that parallel in mind.

First of all, the Joads travel in a covered wagon. True, it is an improvised truck, but Steinbeck very carefully calls attention to the rigging up of a tarpaulin cover to enclose the family living-space in the rear. Moreover, this wreck of an automobile is in such bad shape that one hardly thinks of it as machinery. Certainly the Joads do not. They regard it with affection and concern, and they minister to its needs till it becomes a living thing, a member of the family. The truck is both their covered wagon and their ox team. And, as with the oxen of all these westering romances, the truck's weariness and infirmities provide one unfailing device for suspense, especially in the fearful crossing of the Mohave desert. By the traditional miracle, it barely manages to stagger across desert and mountains to the western Eden. But its hooves are mighty sore.

The main link between *The Grapes of Wrath* and its parent genre is, of course, Steinbeck's handling of the long trek itself: its use, that is, both as unfailing source of episode and as the formal, or structural, principle that holds the novel together and moves it along. In a novel like Guthrie's *The Way West*, or Hough's *Covered Wagon*, the journey involves two major thematic movements. From the jumping-off place to the valley of the Platte things go pretty well. An occasional Indian skirmish provides excitement, but the real dangers lie ahead. This is the idyllic part of the trip, the "camping-out" part, where man proudly toughens up, communes with nature, and sings happy folk-songs around the campfire under the western stars. So far, so good; and

the author is a bit sad to pass on to the next movement of his piece. But now the high plains and the mountains and the deserts must be crossed. The Indian attacks are serious now, punishing, and the going is terrible. This is the agony which earns the promised land. The promised land itself hardly figures in such tales, except that one does finally get there. And that ends it.

The Joads' pilgrimage follows this formula, but with a difference that is, narratively, much to Steinbeck's advantage, because it allows him to continue his story, with heightened excitement, right where the traditional "Westward-Ho" novel has to stop. Since the Joads' Garden of the West is already pre-empted, they must continue their harassed journey indefinitely, in search of a homestead that never materializes. *The Grapes of Wrath* could theoretically go on forever. It almost does. What Steinbeck has done with the westward journey formula is simple but ingenious. His pre-Platte movement extends up to the border of California, and the counter-movement of agonized effort and cruel Indian forays is transplanted right into the western haven itself.

Although the Joads do not cross *their* hundredth meridian until they arrive at Needles, California, this "first half" of their journey otherwise runs true to form. We get the conventional note of pathos-confirming-high-endeavor when Grandpa dies at the close of the first day out, unable to stand the shock of transplanting. He is then buried in the regulation nameless grave on the trail, and Steinbeck pointedly has the Joads conceal his fresh grave from the prying eyes of the redskins, by strewing leaves over it. (In this case, as elsewhere in *The Grapes of Wrath*, the state troopers function as latter-day redskins—cruel, inhuman beings, never to be trusted for a minute. Tom Joad knows that if they find Grandpa's illegally buried corpse, they will make trouble.)

But sadness is only a minor theme of this "first half" of the traditional journey, which typically stresses the life-affirming impact of the westering experience upon the people involved in it. Steinbeck goes right along with the formula. The Joads meet and join up with the Wilsons, and thus we get a wagon train—or, to go a step farther (and this also is strictly in the *genre*), we get an embryonic society: uprooted men shed the old society, and during the rejuvenating continent-crossing they create a new one, a

"good" one, ministering to simple but immemorial human needs. Out of this social compact formed in a state of nature, new "leaders" emerge. In the Joads' case, Ma takes over, surprising herself as much as her men-folk by her new stature—which she achieves (as all "Wagons West" leaders must) by forcibly taking charge in a situation threatening the cohesion and safety of the new wagon-train society. Ma Joad, brandishing her jackhandle at Pa, is an archetypical character.

And the society she rules behaves just as predictably as she does. It adjusts its ways to the primitive life of the trail (not much of a trick for the Joads—but at least they had left behind the simple amenities of a permanent shelter and a cookstove). This wagon-train meets others, and celebrates these occasions with folk songs and rude goodfellowship. It temporarily breaks down, too, of course—a burned-out bearing substituting for a broken wagon wheel or moribund ox team. It overcomes such difficulty by the usual communal effort, demonstrating the viability of its social compact. Nothing can stop this westward movement.

Unfortunately, no courtship occurs during this first phase of the journey. Maybe Steinbeck felt he was being orthodox enough without going all the way. However, the incessant love-making of Rose of Sharon and her new husband, Connie, provides a somewhat similar, though less genteel, titillation. Unfortunately, too (though as we've seen, necessarily), Grandpa had to die at the outset. Otherwise we would have had in him a workable facsimile of the regulation mountain-man—not, of course, in the role of trusted guide but in that of hearty vulgarian, a combination of the sentimental literary "grotesque" and the prankish Sut Lov-ingood protagonist of western humor. But these are minor and allowable omissions. The Joads' westering exhibits all the really necessary ingredients of the first act of the *genre*.

The Joads' "second act," as I said earlier, represents a geographic displacement of the "tragic" phase of the *genre*, since Steinbeck, for his own very good reasons, stages it *within* the longed-for Western Garden. The customary shift to suffering and desperation is abruptly announced at the California state line. This involves not only the crossing of the Mohave desert, during which Grandma so spectacularly gives out, but several important

preliminary incidents as well, which occur during the Joads' breathing spell (also customary) on the Colorado River before they tackle the climactic dangers ahead. Here the prized solidarity of this modern wagon-train is at last disrupted. Noah Joad—the looney son—deserts the party to wander aimlessly down-river, because, as he explains, "I can't leave this here water." (Why did Steinbeck have Noah do this particular crazy thing? One hopes the author had more in mind than a biblical association of "Noah" and "water." Maybe he was making one more concession to his story-formula, wherein the most faint-hearted pioneers turn back from the arid strangeness of the lands beyond the hundredth meridian.) Here, too, the other family that completed the Joad wagon train is halted by the imminent death of a frail and suffering wife. And here—if I may be allowed to press my analogy all the way—the first "Indian attack" occurs, when a blustering and pitiless California state trooper threatens the Joads, so that they must give up their needed two-day rest and plunge ahead into the desert to escape his renewed onslaught, scheduled for the next morning.

For a moment, when the Joad caravan laboriously tops its last mountain pass and gazes out over the incredibly beautiful, fruitful valley of its dreams, the West has been won. "God Almighty," Pa intones in his role of the fulfilled pioneer, "... I never knowed there was anything like her . . . Ma, come look. We're there!" Steinbeck's prose at this point achieves Hollywood lushness as he labors to produce a heightened composite image of Everyman's vision of the Garden of the West. It looks like Paradise. Only it isn't. And Pa Joad is sadly wrong. They are not "there" at last, and they never will be. Their real time of troubles—corresponding to the desperate second act of the "Covered Wagon" romances—has hardly begun.

There is no need, here, to examine this concluding section of *The Grapes of Wrath*, in which Steinbeck departs from the strict form of his *genre* while retaining much of its spirit. The point is that the great trek is concluded and yet in another sense has just begun. Out of this irony and frustration Steinbeck distills his "wrath." Not—be it well understood—so much the Joads' wrath as our own. For the fact is that a reader is more frustrated than

the Joads. It is a literary frustration, to be sure, but one with the strongest and most dependable emotional overtones. And it testifies to the great artfulness—I do not say great art—of *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Steinbeck's book is a triumph of literary engineering. What makes *The Grapes of Wrath* a popular novel also gives it its emotional high voltage. The "Covered Wagon" romance-formula requires the *winning* of the west. A homestead at the end of the trail is the only appropriate reward for so much agony. By providing the formula, without the reward, Steinbeck makes the plight of his modern pioneers utterly outrageous, precisely because it does outrage the *genre* ending. For Steinbeck's purpose, western fiction was far more useful than any mere western fact. It enabled him to outdo spectacularly the standardized police brutality and capitalist villainy in the ordinary "proletarian" strike novel of the nineteen-thirties. He did it with half the effort and twice the wrath.

DIALOG

By BELLE TURNBULL

Let's step outside in the mountain night, renew
Whole vision of this integer of cells:
This house, in separate amber shining so,
Uniquely seen, as though another self:
Unit in space, now for a time clearly
Walled, roofed, warmed: now for a time . . .
How little, how long? Whisper it flawless, dare we?
Shout it! and count its neighbor rays that shine
Digits of oneness, carefree into space!
Yet if tomorrow, yet of tomorrow shaken,
Lightless, forlorn?

Therefore! Look, while the eyes
Know this for ours, and the amber yet unbroken.
Though wood shall rot and light shatter, though
Self dissolve on a breath, the house is now.

Two poems

CARL SELPH

IN MEMORY OF DYLAN THOMAS

And death shall have no dominion.

The larks and horses and holidays brighter
Than snow, and the miners wounded with black
Go on with whatever noise or motion
Over the unfading hills and under
A sky never grown slack.

He lived in a larger than our lives' world
In a mad country most men have forgot
And his ear was bent where they hear no tune
But the dry stone and the dusty wind
And smell the barnlot.

The traffic rumbled on outside his window
And a lost man coughed beside a door
In a city whose sky is blinded by sharp lights
From the hurtling streets below
Along an earsplitting shore.

He learned little in life but childhood's wisdom,
Knowledge of the womb, the fairy hills
Full of flowers and mystery, and the amazing
Love giving all and the general world
Comprehension of their joys and ills.

So he came, a voice, and went
Robbing our grief and love of speech,
Leaving us hope of our involvement
With fair, dark, forces of light
And death, and faith in each.

PICNIC

In its summer running on the barefoot road
My heart was less green than the burst bud
For innocence spilled at the heart of the wood.

Laughing from our mothers in the lavish dawn
We came with sacks of banquet and a tune
Fleshless as my body's neuter song.

We sang our games under the hairy pines,
Made imitative penitence for sins
By playing church and singing steepled rimes.

But the actual sun with his dry light
Spied the tower and with oppressive heat
Knocked our song to a cocked hat.

The older boy halted a palling day
Suggesting the giggling girls not see
Till he and another were stripped and watery.

At whistles all watched their wet hair and skin,
The older boy leap in trembling wind,
The little girls shrieking when he sprang.

Splintering creek and the sun's glitter
Approved the nakedness and laughter,
Fearful pleasures of girls and water.

Yet, building houses by the pinestrewn creek
We wearied of wedlock's anxious pact
That tiring children could but contradict.

Home through barbed pines, lost and late,
My heart puzzled the fearful heat
In riddle silences and sweat.

Detour to Laugherne

FORREST WILLIAMS

At sixpence per mile in a rented car I doubt very much that I would have taken a hundred-mile detour in 1951 to the southern coast of Wales if the poet I hoped to meet there, Dylan Thomas, had written only the more or less Freudian poems, or the so-called "absolute poetry," for which he was known among critics. My private prejudice concerning art, which I had been accumulating during several months of travel, was that it should help one to see more clearly, and preferably to see things rather enduring, like human beings, one's own society, or death, or love, or trees. I had read Dylan Thomas' "Poem In October" and by means of it had seen more clearly, I thought, some countryside, a town, water, a hill and a sky. I hoped my detour would give me a glimpse of the poet who could do what seemed to me so extraordinary and naturalistic a thing in these introspective times. It turned out that "*Dill'n, Look you!*"—as the Welshman resurrected from *Henry V* told me in the village of Laugherne—could be found in no less changeable a setting than London's broadcasting studios, just like almost any other contemporary British poet at one time or another. I was to have only a brief meeting with Dylan Thomas months later and thousands of miles away in, of all unlikely places, Chicago. But though I did not meet the poet at Laugherne, I met the poem.

Only twice before have I had the same surprising sense of recognizing a strange land, and both earlier recognitions had been prepared by great artists: E. M. Forster had "imitated" India; Van Gogh, Arles. For all the subjectivity of Dylan Thomas' poetry he succeeded, I think, in an almost classical "imitation" of Nature when he wrote of Laugherne and its surroundings. The cliff path leading to the house where he lived is approached by passing near the castle, "brown as owls." Below, "the net webbed walls"; from the shack where he worked could be seen the bay and Fern Hill, which (it was August then) was "a wonder of summer." When the tide is right, that fine phrase, "the heron

priested shore," is a simple fact. I took some snapshots, which proved quite worthless, being merely photographic. "Poem In October" was written by a natural eye, not an inhuman one.

That is the whole of my recollection. My reason for writing it is simple, but I hope sufficient. It is a rare poet today who can see clearly anything so ordinary as the place where he has lived most of his life. To be a spiritual exile has become a material tradition. Dylan Thomas could be, and more often than not was, as esoteric as any of his contemporaries, and the excellent reason for this is doubtless that a poet must find freedom. But in such poems as "A Winter's Tale," "Poem In October," "Fern Hill," and "Lament," he showed that he could write what he had seen with his eyes and touched with his hands. "In the White Giant's Thigh" promised more of the same on a vast scale. Some poet may accomplish this on a vast scale, perhaps by refusing to leave what he knows, by remaining in his country, or *département*, or shire, even if this commits him to living in and writing about a chicken coop. For this reason, what I recall concerning Dylan Thomas, his occasional but completely genuine naturalism, may be worth mention. The detour to Laugharne impressed it on my mind, and his recent death reminded me of that trip; but anyone can see for himself what I mean, without making that detour, by reading "Poem In October."

I STUDY THE BUGS

By GLORIA BRESSLER

I study the bugs in a puddle of mud,
I concentrate on the ground, and dust,
I provide my mind with nearby rubbish,
With piles of dirt and rust.
I smile with joy at garbage trucks
When everyone else seems to mutter;
I hunt for junk in the neighborhood streets,
And take great pains whenever it rains,
To be sure to observe the gutters.

Congress — political octopus

HOMER CLARK

In 1795 Congress ratified the Jay Treaty with Great Britain, which had been signed in an attempt to settle some of the disagreements arising between the two countries after the Revolution. Because the treaty was thought to make many concessions prejudicial to American interests its ratification so angered the citizens of that unsophisticated age that they burned Jay in effigy. (Today his punishment would consist in mere accusations of disloyalty.) The following year Congress, never reluctant to respond to public feeling, or to shift blame from itself, requested President Washington for copies of the instructions which he had given Jay for use in negotiating with the British. The President refused this request, probably because of the opinion, first expressed unanimously by his Cabinet in 1792, that the president had absolute discretion to withhold papers from Congress if their disclosure would be contrary, in his judgment, to the public interest.

In 1953, one hundred and fifty-seven years later, at a time of comparable public indignation, Congress requested ex-President Truman for information about a former official of the executive branch, but this incident was different from the request made of Washington in one significant respect: The request was in effect a demand, expressed in the form of a subpoena. As in Washington's time, the demand was in vain.

During the interval between these incidents, although Congress felt the need of information from the president many times, and often asked him to supply it, Congress never had the temerity to use the subpoena. When a president chose to deny the request, the matter ended there. President Jackson may have been the first to advance as a reason for his refusal the possible injury to the reputations of executive officers if he should give such information, since an official who was the subject of Congressional inquiry would have no chance to reply to charges made against him. The feeling on both sides was often strong, as for example when

Congress asked President Grant to give an account of any executive acts he had performed at a distance from Washington, the purpose apparently being to embarrass him politically by publicizing his frequent vacations from the White House. Later, in 1886, a long hot debate in the Senate was devoted to the problem of executive secrecy. The assertion was made that Congress was entitled to any information it should ask for, on the occasion of the removal by the president of some Republican office-holders. Still, no Congressman used the subpoena power.

The interest of the subpoena incident of 1953 for the student of government is not as evidence that Congressmen are more aggressive now than they were in 1796, but as a revelation of changes in the power of Congress, especially in relation to the presidency. The incident strikingly illustrates that the legislative branch of the government, traditionally one of three equally powerful divisions, has striven, often successfully, to increase its power at the expense of the other two branches, with significant consequences for the inhabitants of the country. The Congress has in recent years seized one function after another which historically belonged to the presidency or the courts, and in many instances the president or the courts have acquiesced in the loss of their powers.

This is a strong statement, which if it rested merely on the Harry Dexter White subpoena incident could not be justified. That episode, dramatic though it was, might be considered an aberration, repudiated by other members of Congress, and perhaps by public opinion generally. A good deal of other evidence exists, however, which amply illustrates the shift in power. One illustration is the Joint Resolution of Congress of 1948, directing all executive departments to make available to Congressional committees any information which the committees should consider necessary for the proper performance of their duties. The Resolution would have made it possible for the committees to have information from the personnel records of members of the executive branch, which could then be "leaked" to the press to serve the political ambitions of individual committee members. This Joint Resolution passed the house but died in the Senate. Even when party differences are taken into account, the Resolu-

tion went farther than any previous attempt to exercise surveillance over the agencies administering the country's laws, although a more limited resolution was proposed in 1909 during President Roosevelt's presidency. Party difference between Congress and the president is no new phenomenon in American politics, but never before had Congress attempted to authorize its committees to reach into executive files by comprehensive general legislation. If the 1954 elections should result in a Democratic majority in Congress, the same dispute might again come up, should, for example, the members of Congress demand information about the removal of officials following the 1952 change in administrations. That is what happened in 1886, when the removal of officeholders brought on an investigation by the members of the opposing party. The matter could ultimately be presented to the federal courts in a justiciable form if Congress should choose to subpoena records of an executive agency and the agency refuse to produce them in obedience to the subpoena. The custodian of the records could then be charged with contempt of Congress, and in the course of his trial the court would have to decide what the powers of Congress properly are in this field. Any prediction of the outcome of such a case would be very rash indeed.

The 1948 Joint Resolution, as well as other attempts to look at executive files, was justified by its supporters as a necessary concomitant of Congressional authority over appropriations for those very same executive agencies. If Congress is to appropriate money for the operation of the State Department, the argument runs, it should be entitled to find out how the Department is being operated. No great perspicacity is required to see that this argument proves too much. If power to appropriate gives unrestricted power to investigate, the president himself, as well as the courts and their judges, would be open to inquiry. It could as well be argued that the power to appropriate gives power to hire and fire, and as a matter of fact it appears that in the State Department, in the case of Scott McLeod, this argument has recently been very persuasive. Regardless of the merits of the dispute, however, the fact that Congress has been so insistent on its right to investigate the executive departments is a strong indication that its own view of its functions has changed and that it is no longer willing to

leave the details of administering the country's laws to the executive agencies.

Congress has in late years altered its relation to the presidency in other ways. In an excellent article in the *Harvard Law Review* for February, 1953, Mr. Robert W. Ginnane describes the substantial number of federal statutes now in force which control the details of administration by the device of resolutions of one or both Houses. An early use of this device was the 1939 Reorganization Act, which provided that plans for the reorganization of the executive agencies of the government promulgated by the president would not become effective if disapproved by concurrent resolution of Congress within a stated time. In this way Congress preserved a veto power over presidential action, a veto power which could be exercised in a non-legislative way, and which was so exercised under a later similar act when Congress refused to approve the creation of a Department of Welfare in the cabinet. Congress can make laws in one way and one way only, that is, by properly enacted statutes which become effective when approved by the president or passed over his veto by the necessary two-thirds vote. Since Congressional resolutions do not go to the president for approval, this means that their use in the Reorganization Acts, or in foreign aid legislation, allows Congress to take an active part in the administration of its own statutes, free of any need for presidential approval. As any lawyer or administrator knows, the administration of a statute can decisively alter its impact, and by keeping its hands on administration, Congress has decisively augmented its power.

A similar technique of control has been used in the field of foreign aid, the Congressional statutes often providing for the termination of aid to a particular country by a concurrent resolution. The Bricker Amendment showed, however, that Congress is not content to rely on this means of control of foreign affairs, but that many of its members wished to gain even greater control over foreign policy by requiring, among other things, that Congress pass legislation implementing treaties before they may become effective as internal law in the United States. The fact that President Eisenhower actively and strenuously opposed this proposal dramatically revealed the concern of the executive branch at this Congressional grab for power.

Congressional suspicion of the administration of its laws by the executive branch has in no area been more striking than in immigration. The Immigration Act of 1952 provides that the Attorney General may suspend the deportation of aliens in cases where deportation would cause such extreme and unusual hardship as to be unconscionable, but that his decision to suspend deportation may be disapproved in any case by a resolution of either House. President Truman's Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, a non-political body, characterized Congressional interference in this field as "obstructive of good government and destructive of fundamental principles."

Congress participates in the day-to-day administration of the immigration laws in still another way, by the passage of "private bills" to relieve the hardships created by those laws in individual cases. In the Eighty-Second Congress 3,302 such bills were introduced for the relief of 5,784 persons, of which 732 bills were passed, affecting 1,364 persons. This situation is bad for two reasons. In the first place, of course, a fair and workable statute should require no such tinkering as this to avoid hardship to individuals. But even more important than that, the spectacle of Congress engaging in the consideration of individual cases on such a scale is astounding when one reflects on the amount of important legislative business which must be got through during each session. Yet in spite of President Eisenhower's strong criticism of the immigration law in his inaugural, Congress apparently intends to make no revisions in it.

A still more radical device for Congressional control over the administration of the laws, and one as yet not very frequently used, is the statute which allows a Congressional committee, rather than the entire body of either House, to veto action by executive departments. This kind of a statute is both radical and dangerous because it places in the hands of the committees power which they have never before had and which courts have held that they cannot constitutionally have. An example is the legislation which required cabinet members to "come into agreement" with certain Congressional committees before buying land for the armed forces. Ordinarily the purchase of property of all kinds for the services would be the responsibility of the appropriate executive

department—war, navy or defense—but these statutes enabled the committees of Congress to take an active part in making the decisions.

So much, in a very brief account, for Congress' invasion of the executive sphere. Other instances might be given, such as Senator McCarthy's "persuasion" of the Greek ship owners to stop trade with Red China, but the foregoing is enough to outline the course of events.

Now what of the assertion earlier made that Congress is also performing judicial functions, that it is assuming powers of adjudicating comparable to those it has assumed in executing the laws? The most impressive evidence for this is the unprecedented case of Denis W. Delaney versus the United States, which was decided in 1952 by the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. Delaney, a former Collector of Internal Revenue for the District of Massachusetts, was indicted in September, 1951, for bribery and other crimes. Upon arraignment he pleaded not guilty and was awaiting trial in October, 1951, when the Subcommittee on the Administration of the Internal Revenue Laws, the so-called King Committee of the House of Representatives, gave notice of its intention to look into alleged maladministration in the Collector's office in Boston. Both counsel for Delaney and lawyers for the Justice Department who were conducting the prosecution urged the Committee not to hold hearings, for the reasons that the hearings would be likely to prejudice Delaney's chance for a fair trial and that they would injure the government's case by a premature disclosure of the evidence. In spite of these protests the Committee went ahead with the hearings in Washington, calling and questioning many witnesses who had testified before the grand jury which indicted Delaney and some who later testified at Delaney's trial.

Delaney was neither called nor invited to attend these hearings, and the witnesses who testified were not subjected to cross-examination. As Judge Magruder of the Court of Appeals later said, "the committee hearing afforded the public a preview of the prosecution's case against Delaney without, however, the safeguards that would attend a criminal trial." In addition, the Committee's evidence ranged far beyond the matters for which De-

laney had been indicted, at the close of which evidence the Chairman spoke of the "deplorable activities of . . . Mr. Delaney." All this was of course fully and vividly publicized in newspapers and periodicals all over the United States, building up the strong impression that Delaney was undoubtedly guilty of the malfeasance for which he had been indicted and of many other crimes as well. To quote again from Judge Magruder: "It is fair to say that, so far as the modern mass media of communication could accomplish it, the character of Delaney was pretty thoroughly blackened and discredited as the day approached for his judicial trial on narrowly specified charges."

In November, 1951, Delaney's counsel moved to postpone the trial until the effect of the unfavorable publicity could die away, arguing that under the circumstances he would not have an impartial trial. The court denied this motion, the trial was held in January, 1952, and Delaney was convicted. The Court of Appeals, however, held that the postponement should have been granted because the fair trial guaranteed to all accused criminals, thieves, murderers and Collectors of Internal Revenue, by the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution had not been accorded to Delaney. The court said that the activities of the King Committee, an arm of the very same government which was trying Delaney, had created such prejudice in people's minds that it would be difficult to determine Delaney's guilt or innocence solely on the basis of evidence presented at his trial. This statement by the court, let it be said for the benefit of all non-lawyers, was emphatically not a finding that Delaney was innocent. It was merely a decision that he could not fairly be tried at that time, and that his trial should have been postponed until the danger of prejudice had been substantially removed.

The Delaney case then presents the interesting sight of a Committee of Congress insisting on holding its own "trial" at a time when one of the alleged culprits was already under indictment in the courts and when the hearings could not help but create damaging publicity. In fact, as the Court of Appeals suggests, the desire for publicity may have been one of the reasons for holding the hearings. If the purpose of the King Committee was, as the purpose of all Congressional investigating committees supposedly

is, to gather facts for possible legislation upon the subject under inquiry, the Committee would have come under no handicap by deferring an investigation of Delaney's conduct until after his trial. The conclusion is inescapable that in spite of the Committee Chairman's disavowal of attempts to try the guilt or innocence of anyone, the effect of the hearings was to discredit Delaney as completely as any criminal conviction could do.

What is this but the assumption of one of the functions of courts, the adjudication of guilt and its punishment? In many cases, especially those involving other than habitual criminals, the shame and public disgrace resulting from such hearings are just as severe punishment as the fine or imprisonment customarily imposed by the courts. By assuming to act as judges Congressional committees can place the courts in the dilemma of trying defendants unfairly, as in Delaney's case, or trying them only after long delays when the publicity has died away. At the very least this is a substantial interference with the processes of criminal justice.

The unthinking response to all this may be, "Oh well, Delaney was certainly guilty anyhow." But precisely there lies the greatest evil. As a result of committee action in cases like Delaney's the best procedure Anglo-American ingenuity has been able to devise for ascertaining whether or not he was guilty has been contaminated. No one can ever be certain, after the torrent of publicity let loose by hearings of this kind, whether a jury which had not been engulfed by that torrent would have convicted him. And even if by some chance he should be acquitted by the jury, the escape from fine or imprisonment would be largely anti-climax, since so much serious damage would have been done him by the hearings that he could hardly hope to recover his reputation.

At that, Delaney's case was not as shocking as some others, since he eventually did have a day in court, a chance to rebut the evidence against him, the right to cross-examine his accusers, and the knowledge that his guilt or innocence would be determined by a jury as impartial as it could be. Other persons whose activities have been the object of testimony in Congressional hearings have not had that much satisfaction. They find their characters smeared with never a chance to meet the charges, and in fact very often no specific charges are made, as in the case of Professor

Owen Lattimore where a federal court has found that most of the charges made against him were so vague and nebulous that a jury would be indulging in speculation if allowed to pass upon them.

The difficulty in such cases, and it is a real one, has always been to define the power of Congress to inquire in such a way as to allow it to get the facts it needs for enlightened legislation, but at the same time to limit that power sufficiently to protect the rights of individuals being investigated. Thus far no court has evolved a satisfactory definition. The Supreme Court has dealt with the issue twice. An early case held that an investigation of the banking house of Jay Cooke & Company, then a debtor of the United States, was outside Congress' power. In 1927 another case upheld an investigation into alleged misconduct of the former Attorney General of the United States, Harry Daugherty. The Court found that this inquiry, although aimed at a department in the executive branch of the government, had legislation as its ultimate object and was therefore within the authority of Congress. The Court failed to say what that legislation might have been. The case does not say that Congress' power to investigate is unlimited, but it does make a broad assumption, which may or may not have been warranted by the facts, as to the propriety of the Congressional purpose.

Many cases in the lower federal courts have held investigations of subversive activities, and of other matters, proper on the theory that if legislation could conceivably result from the investigation it is within the constitutional power given to Congress. As one case put it, if the statute authorizing the investigation states that its purpose is to get facts as a background for legislation, the courts must accept that declaration of purpose at face value, even though a member of the committee publicly states that the committee's object is to expose the political beliefs of individuals.

Unless the Supreme Court speaks on the issue, it therefore appears that no practical limits upon the activities of investigating committees are likely to be imposed by the lower courts, so that it is now possible, and will be in the future, for irresponsible committees to inflict serious harm upon individual citizens by procedures which do not meet the criteria of fairness accepted in

Anglo-American legal systems as essential for the protection of human rights. One trained in the law cannot be expected to watch this development calmly. It makes the common phrase "a government of laws" sound hollow indeed, since it singles out for special treatment just a few of the many thousands of accused criminals and deprives those few of basic procedural protection. In many cases it injures persons who are not even accused of crime, and is thereby doubly reprehensible. So long as the members of Congress are willing to impose this kind of tyranny upon America, and so long as American citizens are willing to submit to it, however, there seems no systematic way of preventing its evils.

If Congressional intrusion into judicial activity is to be deplored, it does not follow, of course, that Congressional attempts to translate the general into the particular by administering its own legislation is equally bad. Obviously the statutes should be administered in such a way as to carry out the purposes of the legislature which enacted them. Congress may argue then that by concerning itself with the details of administration it is merely ensuring a proper performance of its statutory purpose. This may be true, but the difficulty is that Congress cannot hope to administer all the statutes, and its attempts to administer even a few of them are a dangerous drain on the time and energy available for carrying on its other business. It seems to me that this tendency of Congress to keep its fingers on the administration of some statutes, which is most evident in foreign affairs and matters connected with the cold war, may be a symptom of an underlying defect in the traditional separation of powers, and perhaps an unconscious groping toward a new system which will reduce the chances that statutes will be frustrated by hostile or wrong-headed administration. It may be evidence, of which serious account should be taken, that there is a necessity for a change in our system which will provide a greater unity of purpose and method between those who pass and those who administer the country's laws.

LULLABY FOR A MATHEMATICIAN'S CHILD

By ISOTTA CESARI

Sleep, my little extension in time,
Sleep.
Covered with integrals
Among intervals
Sleep.

Father is hunting infinity
He will bring it home
For you and me. Someday.
Sleep.

Sleep, my little extension in time,
Sleep.
Eigenvalues clad in mantoids
Isomorphisms onto
They shall not harm you.
Sleep.

To-morrow the tangential plane
To-morrow the little subsets.
1,2,3, . . . one, two, three, infinity
And beware of Bourbaki.
Sleep.

The credometer

WILLIS THORNTON

It was the credometer, of course, that saved civilization.

Just at the time when everybody was sure science was going to do us all in, Professor Hardcase came along with science's ultimate gadget and saved us. Everybody was so grateful that they stifled their annoyance at the scientists' "I told you so."

Yet the idea was perfectly simple, as great ideas so often are. It was this: for all the thousands of years of civilization, people had focused their attention on *what* people believed. No one thought much about *how hard* they believed it.

That was because no one had made a perfectly simple distinction. Within the mind, within the individual person, of course they had been right; nothing could be as important as *what* is believed. But no one had noted that in the realm of public affairs, common concerns, intensity of conviction was the important thing.

Even had this been conceded, nothing could have been done about it until Professor Hardcase invented the credometer, the apparatus which established degrees of belief with hairline accuracy.

Until this measurement was possible, we had to guess about the phenomenon of belief itself. Naturally no one could quite grasp the vital importance of belief-intensity until it could be measured.

There were dim suspicions, of course, that nine-tenths of the world's woes had stemmed from entrusting public action to people who believed certain things too hard. Oh, the world saw clearly enough that without belief nothing at all was done. But the converse was not even suspected: that people with too great a degree of belief are almost certain to do too much.

A simple example: that a person should believe, however strongly, that his future in heaven depends on his standing on his head three hours a week, is singular but scarcely important. He may believe in it so strongly as to act upon it himself, yet cause

no more concern to others than a raised eyebrow. What was not previously realized was that such a 100% believer must under no circumstances be entrusted with power over others. For of course we now know that such a person, holding so strongly such a belief, can never rest until everybody else is compelled to stand on his head three hours a week. And three thousand years of history were studded with people being made to stand on their heads for no better reason than that they had entrusted power to persons who believed too strongly in the headstand.

It seems strange that the human race, dizzy from its long series of mandatory headstands, was so slow to realize that such people are dangerous, and that their dangerousness arises simply from an excess of belief, even occasionally belief in good causes. True enough, certain progressive steps had been instigated by such zealots, but they scarcely balanced the fact that they had been responsible for almost all of the misery, the wars, the persecutions, the inquisitions and horrors that had beset mankind.

The Great Realization was simply this: that whatever may be the case in matters of private belief (we will not here go into the personal psychological consequences of too-intense belief) in the public field no one had the right to act on other people unless his own beliefs were tempered by certain salutary doubts as to their own infallibility.

Once it became possible, with eternal thanks to Professor Hardcase, to measure with complete accuracy degrees of intensity of belief, it was quite easy to enact the laws that saved civilization. The laws provided:

That anyone whose belief in anything exceeded 80% or fell below 30% was completely debarred from all public activity. This was, of course, no restriction on personal liberty. Such persons might have as positive beliefs as they liked, and were quite at liberty to regulate their own lives thereby, so long as they did not bother others. A 100% believer in the thesis that to eat eggplant is to court eternal damnation, simply gave up eggplant. But all others remained quite free to dine blissfully on eggplant every day of the year if they so wished, though not very many did.

But the 100% anti-eggplant-ite was forever barred by law from taking any part in public affairs which would enable him to in-

fluence the general laws. If there were ever to be any anti-eggplant laws, they would have to be enacted by legislators whose minds were shown by the deadly-accurate credometer to be no more than 80% anti-eggplant. Much legislation of this kind thus languished for lack of support, with no measurable ill effect upon the body politic.

By the same token, people so tired and cynical as to be unable to muster more than 30% belief in anything were also barred from public life, and generally speaking seemed content to go back to playing canasta or watching television.

The credometer was simplicity itself. A forerunner had been seen earlier in the Keeler polygraph, which essayed to tell truth from lies. Professor Hardcase, perhaps to a degree indebted to Keeler, simply fixed a small disc under the patient's collar. In the disc was a delicate thermometer. The patient then being asked questions about his belief in various matters, the credometer registered the degree of belief by the extent to which he became hot under the collar. It was unerring.

The vogue for the credometer swept across the world like a new record on the hit parade. While its disadvantages to most of those in power in many countries were manifest, they could no more resist being tested than a woman can pass a weighing-machine. Such is the fascination of gadget-science.

And it quickly became apparent that the troubles of the mid-Twentieth Century were exactly those of earlier millennia. It was the 100% believers in Communism, in Free Enterprise, in Seventh-Day Adventism, in Symbolism, and the Hollywood Diet, and Science, who were ruining the world, just as the 100% believers in Baal and Roman Destiny, and Infant Damnation, in Napoleon's Star, Radical Abolitionism, and the White Man's Burden had done it before.

After passage of U. S. Public Law 143,689,487,891 in 1975, and enactment of similar legislation in every major country in the world, all the world's public woes began to right themselves. In no major country was anyone placed in a position of public power who did not have a healthy 20% doubt of everything proposed. The immediate result was peace. Nobody starts a war who is not convinced that he is (in the higher sense at least) 100% right.

Social reform continued at the steady pace by which alone anything permanent is accomplished, simply because with nobody 100% convinced at either end of the scale that profits were God's will or that the world owed him a living just for being in town, there was less conflict and less resistance to obviously sane solutions. The whole world breathed easier, and from that time it took the steady upward course it has never ceased to follow since.

And that is how Science, which came so near to destroying the world, saved it at last.

Recommended reading

JIM ALLEN (History)—(1) R. L. Heilbroner, *The Worldly Philosophers*. "Well thought out survey of economic and social philosophers, principally of England from Adam Smith to J. M. Keynes."—(2) Leslie Paul, *The English Philosophers*. "Best recent, inclusive summary of English thought, economic, political, scientific, religious, philosophical."

ROBERT G. ATHEARN (History)—Elmer Davis, *But We Were Born Free*. "One of the sharpest indictments of the 'age of hate' in print."

HAZEL E. BARNES (Classics)—Erwin R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*. "An exciting new theory concerning the kind of Judaism within which Christianity developed and a new interpretation of fundamental religious meanings."

DAVE BARTELMA (Physical Education)—Jay B. Nash, *Philosophy of Recreation and Leisure*. "An interesting and challenging discussion of 'Can America Be Trusted with Leisure' and 'Can Man Live in the World He Has Created.'"

ANDREW BOWMAN (Philosophy)—(1) Pohl and Kounbluth, *Space Merchants* (Ballantine Books). "Contemporary social criticism at its best. A vision of the future based upon a selection and emphasis of current social tendencies—population increase, the growth of advertising and the mass media, corporization of business enterprise, and the shift of public interest from heroes of production to heroes of consumption."—(2) Sinclair Lewis, *It Can't Happen Here*. "A fine novel pointing out that, as a matter of fact, the growth of totalitarianism can happen here unless men of good-will guard their liberal heritage as jealously as their lives."

C. A. BRIGGS (Architecture and Architectural Engineering)—Aronin (Jeffrey Ellis), *Climate and Architecture*. "An excellent treatise on climatic factors such as sun, temperature, wind, precipitation, etc. and their effects on building, and what can be done architecturally to increase human comfort in and around buildings."

C. W. CASTILLO (Speech)—Rollin W. Quinby, "The Western Campaigns of Dwight L. Moody," *Western Speech*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, March, 1954. "A very clear and interesting article about one of America's great evangelists."

VIRGINIA COFER (Student Employment)—(1) H. Allen Smith, *London Journal*. "This is really humorous stuff; best light reading I've done in a while."—(2) Morton Thompson, *Not As A Stranger*. "A most interesting fictional biography of a medical doctor; certainly not excellent writing, but fascinating reading, just the same."—(3) James Jones, *From Here to Eternity*. "You have to push yourself during the first part of the book—you want to fling it away from you because you're shocked at the constant use of obscenities and vulgarities—then you find that this is a powerful story that won't be put aside until you reach the bitter end."

J. W. COHEN (Philosophy)—K. M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance: A Survey of the Vasca Da Gama Epoch of Asian History, 1498-1945* (New

York: John Day, 1954). "A penetrating survey by a competent Indian historian of 450 years of Western encroachment and eventual domination of Asia seen from the receiving end. It would appear to be required reading for every thinking American and European today. It is a mature and balanced work. The Portuguese, Dutch, British, French, American and Russian stories are all there, what they did to India, China, Japan and Indonesia, stage by stage. There are some stark implications for present policies of the West in Asia and for prevailing religious and cultural presuppositions of the West about the East."

STUART CUTHBERTSON (Modern Languages) — (1) Dorothy Pillsbury, *No High Adobe*. — (2) Stuart Chase, *The Power of Words*. — (3) Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*. "Metalinguistics in practice (1) and in theory (2). These two books can constitute the first step toward 'making each far horizon naught but a familiar scene.' The third suggests means of applying the humanities."

ANN JONES (Fine Arts) — Charles Davis, Editor, *Egyptian Book of the Dead*. "Interesting rituals and beautiful hieroglyphic calligraphy. A most amazing and eye-opening glimpse of the origin of many of our own myths, superstitions and rituals. In many ways, it is barbaric and primitive, but it has great dignity and great respect for the spirit of man."

BURTON W. JONES (Mathematics) — (1) G. H. Hardy, *A Mathematician's Apology*. "A fascinating account of a mathematician's outlook on life written by one of the finest mathematicians of recent years." — (2) and (3) L. R. Lieber and H. G. Lieber, *Non-Euclidean Geometry and Infinity*. "Popularly written accounts on important mathematical ideas." — (4) Horace C. Levinson, *The Science of Chance*. "Largely written for non-mathematicians."

T. PAUL MASLIN (Biology) — G. S. Carter, *Animal Evolution* (London: Sedgwick and Jackson, Ltd., 1951). "An extremely readable analysis of current concepts of evolution without a tedious review of the evidence that evolution has occurred."

J. D. A. OGILVY (English) — (1) Carola Oman, *Crouchback*. "A historical novel of the first rank, not mere swashbuckling and sex (the story of Richard III told from the point of view of Ann Warwick), which has never received the recognition it deserves." — (2)orgette Heyer, *Cotillion*. "Another good (though less serious) historical novel, which combines entertainment with a good picture of the Regency. One can trace the beginnings of the emergence of the Bertie Wooster type in the hero."

JOHN J. PATTON (English and Speech) — (1) Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*. "I believe that anyone interested in the liberal arts would find this an extremely enlightening and thought-provoking book. The author's remarks on poetry provided me with altogether new concepts." — (2) Nathaniel West, *The Day of the Locust*. "It would be difficult to characterize the neurotic quality of this worm's eye view of Hollywood. The novel shifts between a dispassionately realistic insight into the motives of Hollywood types and a kind of phantasmagoric nightmare about the essential unreality of the world in which these types live." — (3) A. E. Coppard, *Collected Tales*.

"Perfectly executed short stories, beautifully and skillfully written. Just when we feel that the author is a trifle detached from human travail, he gives us a penetrating and shrewd slice of life which is instantly recognizable."

HENRY PETTIT (English)—T. S. Eliot, *The Confidential Clerk*. "Here is Eliot at his best in light, gay comedy directed at our incurable love of sentimental attachments and based on the Shakespearian adage that it is a wise child who knows his own father."

RUFUS PUTNEY (English)—Learned Hand, *The Spirit of Liberty*. "In these essays and addresses Judge Hand speaks with the tolerance, discrimination, courage and wisdom his long experience has bred. His spirit is a restorative medicine for an age sick with too much fear and too little faith." (See the quotation from this collection in Mr. Putney's "Senators or Prophets" in this issue.)

WALTER ORR ROBERTS (High Altitude Observatory)—J. B. Conant, *Modern Science and Modern Man*. "Gives a clear picture of the methods and motivations of the modern scientist—and dispels the false notion widely held that scientists behave much differently from other people creatively engaged in other pursuits."

J. H. RUSH (High Altitude Observatory)—Harrison Brown, *The Challenge of Man's Future* (Viking, 1954). "One becomes so accustomed to seeing the world's problems discussed in terms of communism and anti-communism that it is a healthful experience to be reminded that, even if the 'baddies' were to go away, we should still have to face up to problems of almost overwhelming difficulty. Brown's book is the best I have seen on the basic problem of balancing resources against population. His scope is planetary, and he does not shrink from fundamental unpleasantnesses."

RICHARD C. TOBIAS (English)—Andre Gide, *Lafcadio's Adventures*. "Possibly Gide is more talked about than read; the publication of his morality play *Lafcadio's Adventures* in an inexpensive edition makes Gide available to all. It is a comic *Magic Mountain*. From Lafcadio's entrance into the action (naked—showing his perfect freedom) to his final decision to own up to a murder, the novel provides not a satire on particular foibles and vices but a trenchant and witty comment on European morality."

GAYLE WALDROP (Journalism)—Gilbert Highet, *The Art of Teaching*. "For new and old teachers, inspiring and suggestive; an excellent job of teaching for he practices what he preaches. Should be 'must' reading for all who teach in universities and elsewhere."

E. J. WEST (English)—(1) Bernard Berenson, *Rumor and Reflection*. "The greatest living art critic musing and reminiscing day by day, from a full mind and a full life about the tortured world of the early '40's while in semi-hiding from the Nazis in occupied Italy. Slow going, but eminently rewarding."—(2) Melville Cane, *Making a Poem: An Inquiry into the Creative Process*. "A slight volume of great provocativeness; a collection of essays by a contemporary minor lawyer-poet on the growth of his own poems; far more suggestive and valuable than most heavy scholarly tomes on the question of what makes an artist tick."—(3) Joseph Henry Jackson, *My San Francisco*.

"An all-too-short tribute to the loveliest of American cities by one of her most devoted sons, normally a student of early criminals of the West; charming and genuinely moving."—(4) G. B. Stern, *A Name to Conjure With*. "Prolific English novelist in her sixties, rambles pleasantly, always wittily and frequently wisely, in the fifth volume of her highly idiosyncratic autobiography, over the associations which names, fictive and historical, imaginary and contemporary, possess for her. A fascinating jumble of reminiscence, creative imagination, memorial tribute, art, music, and literary criticism."—(5) George R. Stewart, *U. S. 40: Cross Section of the United States of America*. "Professor Stewart, travelling East to West over one of our best-known highways, uses his agile and encyclopaedic mind, his verbal dexterity, and his expertly-handled camera to record dozens of examples of the contemporary American scene which add up to an irreplaceable critical and historical comment on the amazingly varied but irresistibly appealing land which is the U. S. A."

(Continued from page 4)

compositions, of which the *Symphony for Chorus and Orchestra* is one of the most recent. This work, from which our passage is quoted by permission of Carl Fischer, Inc., was first performed in December, 1952, with the University of Colorado Choir and the Denver Symphony. On May 14 of this year it was given at the Twenty-third Annual Festival of the Arts, which was held in conjunction with the Sesquicentennial celebration at Potsdam, New York.

BERNICE UDICK, Associate Professor of Spanish at the University of Colorado, is especially interested in Latin American literature. Her articles on Mexican poets of the late nineteenth century have appeared in literary journals in this country and in Mexico.

RUFUS PUTNEY, Professor of English at the University of Colorado, specializes in Renaissance literature, but he also teaches a course on the Bible as literature. He has published articles on Shakespeare, Sterne, and Smollett in professional periodicals.

AUGUST KADOW, who received his M.A. last year from the Bread Loaf School of English, Middlebury College, has taught English at Georgia Tech and in private schools. His poetry has been widely published in university magazines. *The Colorado Quarterly* printed one of his poems in the Spring (1953) number.

WILLIAM E. WILSON, Professor of English at the University of Indiana and former director of the University of Colorado Writers' Conference, is the author of *The Strangers*, *Crescent City*, *The Wabash*, and several historical novels for juniors. His

stories have appeared in *Collier's*, *The New Yorker*, and other leading magazines, including *The Colorado Quarterly*: Winter (1953) and Autumn (1953).

MARY BYNON MATHESON, a native of Pennsylvania, grew up in Denver and has lived in Greeley for the past thirty-five years. In 1949 Mrs. Matheson organized the Greeley Workshop of the Poetry Society of Colorado and served as its director for three years. Her poems have been published in *The Colorado Clubwoman*, *The Denver Post*, and some poetry magazines.

BERNARD BOWRON, Associate Professor of English and Secretary of the Program in American Studies at the University of Minnesota, received his Ph.D. in American Civilization from Harvard in 1948. He is the author of "Realism in America," *Comparative Literature*, Summer, 1951, and "The Making of an American Scholar" in *F. O. Matthiessen: A Collective Portrait*, 1950. His article on Steinbeck is drawn from a paper read before the American Studies Association at a meeting of the Modern Language Association of America.

BELLE TURNBULL lives in the small mining town of Breckenridge, Colorado. She is the author of *Goldboat*, a verse narrative, and of *The Far Side of the Hill*, a novel. Her collection of poems about mountain folk, *Tennile Range*, from which "Dialog" is taken, will be published by Prairie Press.

CARL SELPH teaches English at Alabama Polytechnic Institute. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas and received his master's from Columbia. His poems have appeared in the *University of Kansas City Re-*

view, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Prairie Schooner*, *California Quarterly* and *Poetry Chap-Book*. He published twenty-six poems last year under the title *In A Galloping Wind*.

FORREST WILLIAMS, Instructor in Philosophy at the University of Colorado, grew up in Europe and did graduate study at the Sorbonne. He drove an American Field Service ambulance from 1942 to 1945, and was in charge of liquidating American Red Cross supplies in China-Burma-India during 1946. Six of his translations of French philosophical writings have been published.

GLORIA BRESSLER, a native of New York City, is at present living in Boulder, Colorado, where her husband is a student at the University of Colorado. A graduate of the Cooper Union in New York, where she majored in fine arts, Mrs. Bressler is a painter who likes to write.

HOMER CLARK, Associate Professor of Law at the University of Colorado, served as a law clerk to a judge of the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, 1946-47; practiced law in New Haven, Connecticut, 1947-49; and taught at the University of Mon-

tana, 1949-53. He is the author of articles in various legal periodicals.

ISOTTA CESARI, a junior majoring in English literature at Purdue, was born in Germany and has lived a number of years in Italy. She came to the United States four years ago with her husband, a professor of mathematics at the University of Bologna, who had been invited to visit several American universities. A number of her literary and scientific translations have appeared in Italian and German publications.

WILLIS THORNTON, a lecturer in journalism at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, was a newspaperman for twenty years prior to entering the military service in World War II. He is the editor of an anthology, *The Best of Life*, and the author of *Almanac for Americans*, *The Nine Lives of Citizen Train*, and *Newton D. Baker and His Books*.

LYNN WOLFE, Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at the University of Colorado, is a well-known painter and sculptor in the Rocky Mountain region whose work has been exhibited in national shows and galleries, including the Metropolitan.

